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POLAR SCENES,
EXHIBITED IN THE
VOYAGES OF HELMSKIRK AND BARENZ
TO THE
Northern Regions.
1793, &c.



LONDON:
J. HARRIS AND SON,
CHURCH-YARD, ST. DUNSTON'S.

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Richard Cresswell's
Book.

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POLAR SCENES.





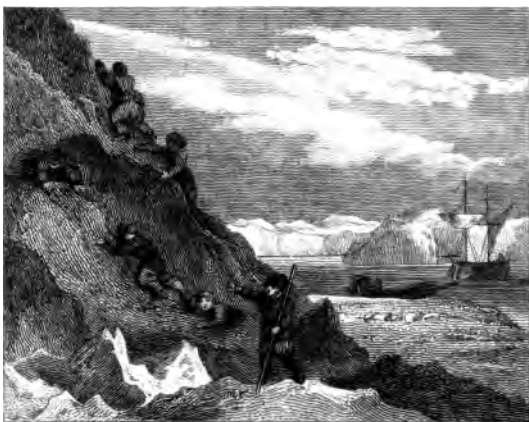
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Phase II.

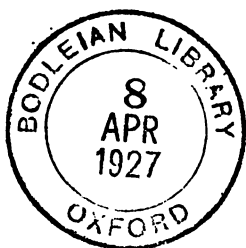
Published Sept. 1, 1852, by Harris & Son, corner of S. & P. Streets

POLAR SCENES,
EXHIBITED IN THE
VOYAGES OF HEEMSKIRK AND BARENZ
TO THE
Northern Regions,
AND IN THE
ADVENTURES OF FOUR RUSSIAN SAILORS
AT THE
ISLAND OF SPITZBERGEN.
TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF M. CAMPE,



ILLUSTRATED WITH 36 COPPER-PLATE ENGRAVINGS.

LONDON:
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POLAR SCENES,

&c. &c.

INTRODUCTION.

I SHALL begin, my young friends, by introducing you into a very cold and desert country. Our first voyage shall be to Spitzbergen and Nova-Zembla. You know, without doubt, what countries these are, and where they are situated; but, however, take the trouble of looking for them on the map once more, that their situation may be familiar to you during the whole of my narrative. Do you see there to the north of Norway, towards the Arctic Pole, a large island and numerous small ones? The former is Spitzbergen: if even there were no name, you could not fail of finding it, because it is the nearest to the Pole of any land yet discovered. It has not been always known that there was a country here in the

very midst of the Frozen Ocean: we do not know much about it now; but if you go on reading, you will learn what those persons who have visited it have written respecting it, and who was its first discoverer. Now turn your eyes a little to the south-east—there you will see, on the northern coast of Asia, a still larger island, that is, Nova Zembla: it is separated from Asia by a strait called the Strait of Weygaits. Look if it be marked on the map,—if not, do not be surprised, for until lately, it was doubted whether Nova Zembla was an island, or whether it formed a part of the continent of Asia. Now shut your eyes for a moment, and try if you can point out the situation of these countries as well as if you were looking at them. This is what you ought to do whenever you find a country, river, or any place upon the map; and it is by this means only that you will succeed in fixing its situation in your mind. I take it therefore for granted that you will accustom yourselves, whilst reading these voyages, to look on the map for every place that is mentioned.

that it may be deeply impressed on your memory. Without this, you will reap but little benefit from your reading; and that would be contrary to my wish.

When you are told that these countries of which we are speaking are extremely cold, you will easily conceive it, as they are so near the Pole: but when I tell you that the sun does not rise during a great part of the year, and that then it is continual night, you will imagine how dreadful the cold must be.

If ever you wish to join in a voyage for the purpose of whale-fishing, do not forget to provide yourself with warm clothing: without it you will suffer much.

It is now time, however, for me to acquaint you with the persons whose voyages and adventures I am going to relate, and with the design which led them into so gloomy a region of the world.—You all know (do you not?) where the East Indies are, and across what seas we Europeans are accustomed to sail, to arrive there. Look at the map again, and only conceive what a very long voyage it is;

to set out, for instance, from Holland, sail along the English channel into the Atlantic Ocean, then along the coasts of France, Spain, and Portugal, towards the Canary Islands, then along the coast of Africa to the Cape of Good-Hope; and then to ascend the Eastern coast to go to China for tea, or Japan for gold. Instead of taking such a round-about way, the Europeans wished to find a shorter, by water also; for a land journey to such distant countries would not assist the purposes of trade much—I leave you to guess why. Many people, especially in Holland, taking the map of the world in their hands, considered it with attention. “If we could,” thought they, “ascend the Norwegian coast, then sail to the east round Lapland and European and Asiatic Russias, and then sail down between this part of the world and America, would not that be a much shorter way?”—Certainly!—“Come, then, we must try it,” said others; and they fitted out vessels, and sent them to explore these coasts.

You would imagine nothing easier than

to find this route, which is commonly called the North-east passage. But do not judge too hastily, for though it may appear easy, yet it was attended with very great difficulty, and I will tell you besides, they have not yet succeeded. This, I dare say, astonishes you, and you cannot conceive what could have prevented these people from accomplishing their end. Unfortunately, one very grievous difficulty always opposes them. As soon as they reach the north of Russia, their vessels are suddenly stopped, in such a manner, that they are thankful if they can regain their liberty, and return whence they had set out.—I will explain this to you more clearly. The Northern Ocean, on account of the dreadful cold prevalent there, is full of mountains of ice, which float in masses, and unite together more firmly than the waters of a frozen pond in our country. It is for this reason that it is called the Frozen Ocean. Cannot you now imagine why it is not so easy to open a passage on this coast? The Dutch have tried it twice, but both times without success.

At last some men of spirit, who would not easily yield to difficulties, resolved to make a third attempt, and fitted out two ships for the purpose. The command of them was given to James Heemskirk; and those next in command were William Barenz in one of the ships, and John Cornelius Ryp in the other. In the following chapter we shall see them set out.

CHAPTER II.

Departure from Amsterdam.—Discovery of the Bear Island and Spitzbergen.

It was in the beginning of May, 1596, that our mariners set sail from Amsterdam; on the 10th they passed Ulieland (one of the islands which form the boundary of the Zuyder Zee), and entered the Northern Ocean.

The weather was beautiful, and the wind favourable, so they sailed swiftly, and in about

four days found themselves in view of the Shetland Islands, which you see there in the map of Europe between Scotland and Norway. Only think! more than one hundred and eighty leagues in four days!—that may well be called fast sailing. They then steered directly for the North Pole. In a few days they found themselves close by Iceland, in that part of the Northern Ocean where they had imagined the Northern Polar circle was.

By the 1st of June they had passed the seventieth degree north latitude. On this day, to their surprise, the sun did not set; for they were now in regions where, during this season, the sun remains on the horizon for some months, appearing to travel round it in twenty-four hours. Only conceive, my young readers, how strange it must appear, to be suddenly borne into a country where the sun shines with equal splendour night and day, after having lived in places where the rotation is regular and constant! Nothing can be more natural than to suppose, that in such a country the heat must be excessive, at least during the

season in which the sun continues to shine ; since, in our own country, it is only by night that the cool breeze comes to succeed the sultry heat of summer days. But no: in these countries next the Pole, the uninterrupted shining of the sun, even in the height of summer, causes so little heat, that our voyagers shivered with cold ! That is very strange; but whence can it proceed ? Consider a moment, and try if you cannot guess the cause : if you cannot, keep on reading. The reason is this : In these countries, the sun does not rise higher from the horizon in the middle of summer, than it does in our country in the middle of winter ; so its rays can only fall partially upon this part of the world : and you know that a room is much warmer when the sun shines full upon our windows, than when its rays come in obliquely. This will convince you, that, notwithstanding the perpetual daylight, it is not warmer in that country in the midst of summer, than it is here in the midst of winter ; and now you will not be astonished to hear that our voyagers were surrounded by ice on every side.


On the 5th of July, those who were upon deck, raised a great shout, and called their companions to see an immense number of swans which were coming towards them. All ran together, thinking how excellent they would be when roasted, if they could catch a few dozens;—but, when they had looked at the object for a while, they found that their comrades were deceived, and had mistaken lumps of ice covered with snow for swans: however, they bore their disappointment with good temper, and the desire of eating roasted swans soon went off.

A few days before, they were struck with a phenomenon in the air. They saw three suns at the same time in the heavens; and what rendered the sight more marvellous, there were three rainbows also visible. What could this phenomenon mean? Were there really more than one sun in these countries? Or was there any thing supernatural in what these people thought they saw? I will explain it to you, if you do not already know it.

It sometimes happens with us, that two, three, or even more suns appear, or as many

moons at night: they are called Mock Suns, or Moons, and are occasioned by this circumstance. —The vapours are sometimes so dense in the atmosphere, (you know, no doubt, that this word signifies the body of air which is immediately above us,) that the rays of the sun are not able to pierce them; by which means they are reflected, and falling upon our eyes, present the image of a sun, or a moon, if the rays proceed from that orb. Such a phenomenon takes place with us generally in the winter, and just at the time when many vapours frozen in the air, form small particles of ice.

Our navigators sailed some days longer through lumps of ice, which were larger the farther they advanced. On the 9th of July they saw land; they examined their maps to see what country it was, but no land was laid down here, so they concluded this to be an unknown country; they sailed round the coast, and soon saw distinctly that it was an island of about eight leagues in length. Having anchored, some of them got into a boat, and went on shore. The first thing they saw, was



a great number of sea-gulls' eggs: these they carefully gathered up for that night's supper.

Afterwards, to get a glimpse of the distance, they climbed up a rock so steep that it appeared to have been designedly cut perpendicularly. With much difficulty they reached the summit; but now the question was "how they should descend again?" They shuddered when they looked down, and saw with horror to what danger they had unnecessarily exposed themselves. But to conceive the whole of it, you must know that at the foot of this rugged mountain, there were masses of pointed rock, upon which, if they had fallen, they must have been materially injured. It was of no avail to act the coward; so these brave fellows took courage, and partly on their knees, and partly on their bodies, slipped down without injury. Barenz, who was looking at them from the ship where he had remained, already believed them lost.

On the following day they saw a frightful monster twelve feet long; with four paws, shaggy white hair, and a mouth full of sharp

teeth, with which it made a terrible grinding. My young readers can guess perhaps what this monster was. It was a white bear, an animal that is never found but in the most northern parts. It differs from the common bear; first, in size, being as I have said twelve feet and upwards in length; secondly, in colour, being white; and thirdly, in voracity, for they attack indiscriminately both men and beasts. They commonly feed upon fish, sea-calves, and dead whales; hence it is that they live along the coasts and upon the floating ice of the Frozen Ocean: they can swim and dive as well as water-dogs. But however formidable this animal might be, our voyagers were not afraid to attack him. They resolved not to shoot at him from a distance, but to go up to him and throw a rope round his neck, to strangle him or take him alive. Forthwith they jumped courageously into the boat, and rowed towards him; but when they came near, they found him so furious, that they renounced their former plan, and attacked him with hatchets and other sharp weapons. The

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Fig. 13

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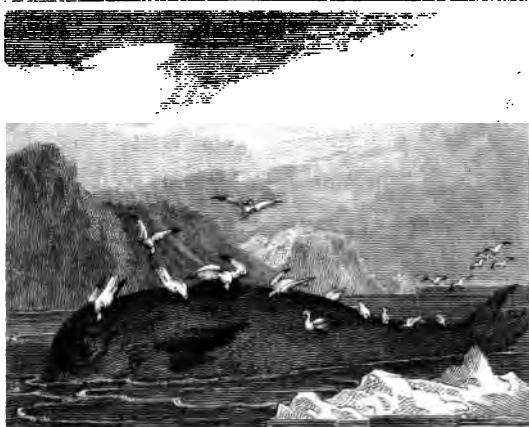


Fig. 14

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battle was obstinate, and lasted a long time; he defended himself for two hours, until at last with one lucky blow they cut off his head, and down fell the huge beast. They dragged the dead body to the ship, flayed it, and prepared some of the flesh for a repast; but they did not find it much to their taste, though some pretend that it is as good as beef. This successful battle against the bear gave rise to the place being called "Bear Island." If you look at the map, you will see it at the north of Norway, towards Spitzbergen.

On the day following they weighed anchor, and continued to sail to the North. In the evening, that is to say, our time of sunset, they saw a large object floating on the sea, which at first they thought was an island, but, when they came nearer, they found it was a dead whale, upon which were a great many sea-gulls devouring its fat with great avidity. It is a pity you have never seen a whale, and cannot picture to yourselves the striking spectacle of such an enormous creature. I only know it by descriptions and representations;

but perhaps I can relate some particulars about it which you do not know or have forgotten. The whale is a native of the Frozen Ocean; it is sometimes, however, found in more southerly seas: it is the largest of all known animals. Formerly there have been many seen of one or even two hundred feet in length, and between seventy and eighty feet in breadth; but now there are so many thousands killed every year, that they are not allowed time to attain to such an enormous size. In these days there are few so long as sixty or seventy feet. The head is the largest part, and forms almost half of the whole body; but the throat is only four inches wide, so that it can only feed upon the herrings and smaller fish of the sea. Its eyes are very small in proportion to the size of its body, being no larger than those of an ox. At the top of its head there are two cavities, from which, as from fountains, it emits the water it has swallowed. The upper jaw contains what is called the whalebone, and is so large and heavy, that it requires the exertion of the whole crew to raise

it on board; the lower is composed of two prodigious bones, ten feet long at least, one foot broad, and half a foot thick.

At Hamburgh, at Altona, and other places where they annually fit out ships for the whale-fishery, they make use of these bones to adorn the great gates, or else saw them, and put them as stakes in places where they wish to prevent horses and carriages from passing. The whole animal is very little else than a mass of fat; and it is for this chiefly that its enemy, man, wishes to catch it, for its oil is very valuable.

I will explain to you the way in which they kill the whale. When he does not remain upon the surface, it is easy to tell where he is by the bubbling of the water which he emits from the cavities. As soon as the fishermen perceive where he is, they ply their oars, and sail towards him. The harpooner, that is to say, the man armed with a harpoon, places himself at the front of the vessel: his weapon is a species of iron dart, with a handle of wood, and is tied to a rope. When they are near

enough to the monster. (and they must approach him with great care, for one single blow of his tail would break the boat in pieces,) the harpooner flings his dart into the body with all his might: instantly the whale starts forward, and generally tries to reach the bottom of the sea, with such swiftness, that it is hardly possible to let out the rope of the harpoon quickly enough; the boat is driven along with as much rapidity as if a violent tempest were driving it. The blood of the animal, in the mean time, stains the surface of the water; he lashes for a long time at the bottom, until at length fatigued, he again seeks the surface to get breath. Then they strike him with a great many long and pointed lances, which, being fastened in the whale's body, present somewhat the appearance of a little forest. After a while, having lost all his blood, he lies dead upon the surface of the water, like a floating island: then the sailors fasten strong ropes to him, and, each boat taking one, they drag him along to the ship (this is called towing): then they get upon his



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back, and cut off the fat, and upper jaw, where is the substance which we call the whale-bone. When they have done one side, they turn the animal over, and do the same to the other side. The skin and bones which afford nourishment to birds of prey and white bears, are left, except those of the under jaw, from whence they extract more than a tun of oil. This little digression will not, I hope, be displeasing to my readers : — but now let us return to our voyagers.

On the 17th and 18th of July they were obliged to make their way through much floating ice, still steering to the North, until at last they arrived at a small island : it is one of those which you see north of the Isle of Bears, but south of Spitzbergen. There was nothing remarkable in it, so they continued their route.

On the day following, our mariners saw land again: this they thought was a part of Greenland; but finding it was not so, they gave it the name of Spitzberg.

On the 21st of July they cast anchor with-

in sight of this land, and some of the crew went on shore to look for ballast. You know, no doubt, what is meant by this word ; but if you read with reflection, as I suppose you do, you will ask, why it should be necessary at this time to look for ballast, after they had already sailed some hundred leagues ? Who will undertake to solve the question ? let him shut the book, and tell us his opinion.

I suppose all my young readers have their answer ready ; it was because they had already consumed a part of what at first formed the lading of the ship, namely, wood and provisions : it was necessary, therefore, to put something else in the place of what they had consumed, to give the ship its proper balance.

Our sailors, having collected a sufficient number of stones and pieces of rock, were just beginning to load their boats, when a large white bear came swimming up to them with every appearance of hostility. Our sailors, like brave fellows, resolved not to wait for him, but to advance courageously to meet him ; and so they did. They soon met, and a furious battle

ensued. Fire-arms were not so much in use at that time as they are now. Our heroes were only armed with hatchets, lances, and weapons of this kind, with which they vehemently attacked their enemy; but the hide of the bear was so very tough, that most of the lances either broke or bent. Besides this, he tried several times to board their vessel, that he might fight with them on more equal terms. Instead of grappling-irons, he made use of his paws, and struck the forepart of the boat so forcibly, that, had the blow been given in the middle, it would probably have upset it. At length he yielded: they killed him, and dragged him on board, where they flayed him, and found his hide to be thirteen feet long.

CHAPTER III.

*Description of Spitzbergen.—Navigation thence to
Nova Zembla.*

THIS country is one of the coldest and most desert in the world. When beheld from a distance, at sea, nothing is perceived but rugged mountains, and those are composed partly of ice and snow, and partly of rocks and stones. With the exception of a few herbs, and a little moss, which spring here and there, there grows not a single plant, not a tree, nor a bush in this land. It is only in the months of July and August that there is the slightest resemblance to summer, and even this short interval of pleasant weather is often interrupted by wintry scenes: storms are very rare in these climates. The long winter night of which we have spoken as lasting four months, is rendered in some degree supportable by the frequent and brilliant appearance of the northern lights.

Amongst the small number of plants which grow there, the wild celery and scurvy-grass are particularly distinguishable: it is not without beneficent views that the hand of Providence has disseminated them, for they form an excellent preventative against scorbutic complaints, to which sailors are particularly exposed.

Besides numerous aquatic birds, white bears, rein-deer, and foxes, are prevalent here. Of the white bear we have already spoken: the rein-deer is one of the most useful animals in the world; it is a great pity that it can only live in the most northern countries. It forms almost the whole subsistence of the Laplander; its milk and its flesh afford him nourishment; he makes use of its skin to clothe him, or to protect his hut from the wind, cold, and rain; it is his beast of burden, and, when harnessed to the sledge, it performs the office of the best horse; from the horns and bones of the animal, various utensils are made, and from its sinews they contrive to make thread. But what is more admirable, this useful

creature is perfectly obedient, and easily subsists on moss and dried leaves: his master, moreover, has no need to provide for him in the winter, for he can provide for himself. Even when the ground is covered with snow to a great depth, he moves the snow away with his foot to procure it, and a very little will satisfy his hunger. We cannot help observing here the wisdom of Providence, in making this animal so easy of support, since he has thought fit to place it in the cold and barren regions of the North. The rein-deer resembles the stag, except that he is rather smaller, and his horns rather differently constructed; the head of the female is equally adorned, which is not the case with the stag.

As for human inhabitants, of these there are none at Spitzbergen; but the coasts are the more on this account inhabited by creatures with which we are not acquainted, and of which it is necessary I should give you some idea. There are found there, for example, besides whales, the calf, or sea dog, the

sea cow, the sword fish, the shark, and others. The sea dog, like the whale, can only live in the most northern countries, where, during summer, it generally remains upon land, and during winter in the sea, and on the ice. Its head resembles a dog's with its ears cut, its snout is covered with hair, like the whiskers of our cats, and over the rest of its body the hair is fine and glossy; its two fore-feet are very short, which enable it to walk, or rather drag itself along; for the two hind paws are more like two fish's tails. They are turned up towards the tail, and serve like oars for the animal to row with. It is from four to eight feet long, and so fat as to afford an abundance of oil: accordingly it is customary to kill a herd of sea dogs when the whale fishery has not been successful. They are found in great numbers, especially when the sun shines, lying upon the ice and snow; and as they cannot run very quickly with their two short legs, it is no very difficult matter to kill a great number of them with a club: but they are very tenacious of life, for we have heard

of one biting with violence after it had been almost stripped of its fat. Their food consists in sea-weed and fish. This animal forms to the poor inhabitants of the Polar Region an object of great importance, being as useful to them, as the rein-deer to the Laplanders: they eat its flesh, they furnish their lamps with its fat, and they make their clothes, cabins, and canoes, out of its skin. With us too they make tobacco bags for country gentlemen out of it, and cover trunks with it. The sea cow resembles the sea dog, except that it is much larger, being nearly the size of an ox, and has two tusks projecting a yard or more on either side of its mouth. Its teeth are more valuable even than ivory, because of their extreme whiteness. These animals also are found in herds, lying on the ice, or in the water. They defend themselves courageously when they are attacked, and help one another faithfully, trying to catch hold of the boat with their strong teeth and upset it, bellowing all the while like bulls. When the sailors are obliged to yield to numbers, they

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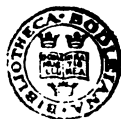


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pursue the boat with such vigour, that it gives rise to battles amongst them, each endeavouring to get before the other. The sea-cows are killed merely for the sake of their teeth, as they are neither eatable nor otherwise useful.

The sword-fish also forms one of the most remarkable inhabitants of the Frozen Ocean. When arrived at full growth, he is from ten to twenty feet long, and weighs about two hundred weight. A very long bone projects from his upper jaw, something in the shape of the blade of a sword, except that it is indented like a saw; for this reason he is sometimes called the "saw-fish." He is an inveterate enemy to the whale, and pursues it with his *sword*, until he has almost killed it. It is said that he takes only the tongue of the whale, and leaves all the rest; so, when the whale-fishers see a whale fighting with a sword-fish, they take care not to disturb them, because they know they shall be saved the trouble of killing it themselves. Sometimes he disputes his prey with the men, and drags

the great body to some distance, although boats full of sailors are trying to drag him in a different direction. As I have given a description of the shark in my "Discovery of America," I must refer my young readers to it, and return to our voyagers.

They sailed for some days along the coast of this desert country, casting anchor in several places, and going in their boats to shore. But, not finding any thing there worthy of delay, they resolved to continue their voyage, to fulfil, if possible, the important design with which they had set out.

Now the difficulty arose, whither should they steer their course? and upon this point, the opinions of the two captains were divided. Cornelius Ryp thought it would be better to advance more to the North, in hopes of finding the sea free from ice. Barenz was of an opposite opinion: he thought, they had already proceeded too far towards the Pole, and that it was necessary now to steer a little to the South. They disputed for a long time, and at last, not being able to agree, they deter-

mined to take the route which each liked best. It was thus that the two vessels were separated. Cornelius sailed to the North, and Barenz to the South, both with the design of turning afterwards to the East. We will abandon the former to his destiny, and follow the latter; perhaps, in the end, we shall learn what became of both. This separation took place on the 1st of July. We will finish this chapter by telling our young readers, that on the same day they came in sight of a country which they afterwards found to be Nova Zembla.

CHAPTER IV.

Their delay upon the coast of Nova Zembla. The Ship falls into great distress.

THE Captain's design was, if possible, to double the northern point of this country, and then steer towards the East. For this purpose, he sailed along the coast; but, although

it was the middle of summer, he could not proceed, on account of the numerous rocks of ice: he was stuck fast near a small island on the western coast of this land, called the "Island of Crosses." Two crosses, placed there probably by the whale-fishermen, who often come into these parts, gave rise to the name. Having cast anchor in this place, Captain Heemskirk got into a boat with some sailors, and proceeded to land at the place where the crosses were found. They sat down near one of these to refresh themselves, and afterwards wishing to examine the other, they approached it, when suddenly they saw two bears lying beneath it. The party, being without arms, were much terrified: the bears meanwhile stood up to see who were coming—for their sense of hearing is more acute than their sight; as soon as they perceived that the disturbers were men, they sprang forward to attack them. It was now that the fear of the sailors was at its height, and they ran with all speed towards their boat; but their commander, who had more courage,

and consequently more presence of mind, stopped them, threatening to plunge his harpoon in the breast of the first man who dared to stir. "If we separate," said he, "one of us will certainly be seized, but if we keep together and raise a great shout, the beasts will not have courage to attack us." They obeyed him, and it happened as he said; they reached the boat in safety. See, my young friends, what it is to have courage:—it preserves us from danger, whereas fear exposes us to it.

They continued to sail along the coast, but were obliged perpetually to open a way for themselves through the ice. When they could not proceed, they fastened the vessel to a mass of ice, and waited until the wind opened a new passage for them. But that you may form some idea of a similar mass, I will describe one which they measured: it was fifty-two fathoms thick, thirty-two below the surface of the water, and sixteen above. And even this did not appear to be one of the largest. They assure us that there are some of these mountains of ice which rise nearly one

hundred fathoms above the surface. Only think! One hundred fathoms! That is much higher than the highest church steeple you have ever seen. Whilst the vessel was thus impeded, the master, who was walking upon deck when it was almost dark, suddenly heard growlings by his side: upon looking, he found it to be a bear trying to get on board. "Come here!" cried he, and immediately the whole crew came on deck. The general shout which they raised at sight of the bear, filled the monster with such consternation, that he forsook his enterprise, and slipped behind a block of ice. It was not long before he returned: but now the men were on their guard; and four of them, having fire-arms, gave him some wounds, which made him retire. He lost himself in the mist and snow, and they saw no more of him.

On the 10th of August the ice broke, and began to float again. The only mass which remained immovable, was that to which the vessel was fastened, though others of considerable magnitude came clash against it as

they passed: by this they knew that it rested at the bottom of the sea. And now my young readers will understand, how they found out that this rock of ice reached thirty-two fathoms under water; since it touched the bottom, they had only to try how deep the water was, to know how thick the ice was.

The ice now began alternately to unite and separate, so that our poor half-frozen adventurers were obliged to work hard to open a passage in the best way they could, whilst the sea was in motion.

During this work, they were perpetually in danger of being crushed by the floating ice, which it required great precaution and address to avoid. Besides this, they now and then received an unwelcome visit from a bear. Sometimes great battles arose, but the men were always victorious.

By means of great exertion they at length gained the northern extremity of this land, and began to double it. Some of the crew having been sent on shore, and having mounted upon a high rock, thought they

observed that the sea to the East was not covered with ice. This was a great source of joy to these poor fellows; they hastened, as soon as possible, to carry the good news to the vessel, and all listened to it with demonstrations of joy. "Be moderate in your joy, my good friends; the hopes of men are often deceitful, and who knows whether yours will not vanish?" And so, alas! it happened on the day following; for when they began to sail where, the evening before, they thought the sea was free, they found it so full of masses of ice, that they were obliged to work hard to regain the coast of Nova Zembla. They attempted the same thing more than once, but always in vain. They then entirely abandoned their design, that of finding a north-east passage to China; and all they wished was, to be able to sail down the eastern coast of Nova Zembla, and thus reach the continent of Asia.

With this view they steered to the South, every time the ice was in movement. But before they had proceeded far, the ice struck the vessel with such force, that they thought



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every moment it would have been smashed. At one time the prow of the vessel was elevated, at another time the stern; then it would become level, but immovable, as though it were walled in. On the 29th of August, the vessel being in this situation, the sailors tried with various instruments to break and separate these masses of ice. On the 30th the ice began again to float; a cold and piercing wind, with a fall of snow, drove the detached pieces against the ship with such dreadful force, that it was expected it would be shivered to pieces every minute.

As the ice collected together more on that side of the vessel where the current was, than on the other, they thought it would have been upset; but at last it collected together on the other side, so that the vessel was perched upon an eminence, as if it had been hoisted by pulleys or other machines. Afterwards other masses came and joined themselves to those which were at the prow, and raised it four or five feet higher than the stern, but presently others came and raised the stern also.

The wind whistled; there was nothing to be heard but the clashing of the cordage covered with ice, the crashing of the vessel in all its joints, and the bellowing of the frozen sea, amidst a direful dashing of mountains of ice.

Young reader! if you are rendered impatient by the trifling inconveniences of life, cast one glance upon this scene: represent to yourself our unfortunate voyagers, who, pierced with cold and in full expectation of their fate, still continued to labour and try every possible means for the preservation of the vessel and themselves, without giving way to any discouragement. Be ashamed then of your effeminacy, and endure minor misfortunes with patience, in order that you may one day be able to bear with courage the great dangers and grievances of life, from which your's will certainly not be exempt! Our navigators, who were expecting every moment to see the total destruction of the ship, put the long-boat and small boat upon

the ice, that these might be safe if that were broken in pieces. Thus desperately were they situated about the 2d of September, when the vessel was again raised aloft by the masses of ice, which came with violence, and now broke it in several places. As they thought by this that the vessel was within a little of being destroyed, they put three casks of biscuits and two small casks of wine into the small boat, and took them to land. On the 3d the ice bound it still tighter ; the strong beam at the stern, to which the helm was fastened, broke off. The cable of the chief anchor, and another entirely new, by which they had fastened the vessel to a great rock of ice, broke like packthread. The hulk of the vessel, however, withstood the violence of the ice in a surprising manner. On the 5th, it was cast upon the coast, but did not break. There was no hope however that it would long resist all this violence ; therefore the sailors continued to convey to shore what things were most necessary, such as powder, balls, fire-arms,

biscuits, wine, tools of every description, and old sails. With these latter they made a tent, to preserve what they had brought.

Some of the crew who had gone into the interior of the country, returned with the joyful intelligence, that they had found a river of fresh water, and a quantity of wood floating by its side. These were trees which the wind and sea had torn from the coast of the continent, and carried to the cold countries of the Frozen Ocean, where there was a scarcity. Is not this a merciful arrangement of all-powerful Providence? This news gave them hopes that they might be enabled to pass a long and severe winter in this cold and desert country. They determined therefore to build a hut, which would defend them in some degree from the dreadful cold, and from the ferocious beasts: but the severe frost, together with high winds and falls of snow, threw so many obstacles in their way, that they were four weeks in accomplishing it. During this interval a few things happened worth telling. On the 15th, the sailor upon

guard saw three bears approaching. He gave the alarm, and the crew prepared to receive them. At some distance from the vessel there was a cask of salt meat open: one of the bears having smelt it, went to it, and was on the point of tasting it, when a bullet from the ship entered his head, and laid him dead upon the spot. The second bear stopped, as if greatly astounded; he looked at, and smelt his fallen companion, and thought it best to retire immediately. The third, however, had slipped behind a mass of ice, and apparently could not digest the matter, for he rose upon his hind feet, which is the posture of these animals when going to attack, and in this warlike attitude marched straight to the sailors to offer them battle, but they receiving him with a bullet, which entered his body, made him relinquish his design, though not very willingly, as they supposed, for they heard him growl. Upon mature consideration, however, he thought it better not to have any thing to do with men who did not understand his jesting; so he took his departure. The

bear which they had killed they endeavoured to preserve, in order to take to Holland, if ever they should be fortunate enough to be delivered from their present miserable condition.

The cold increased every day to such a degree, that our navigators could not keep themselves warm on the mid-deck, where the fire was; they were therefore obliged to put up a fire-place at the bottom of the hold, and then the whole vessel filled so with smoke, that no one could have thought it possible to remain there without being smothered. On the 23d the master-carpenter died. The ground was too hard frozen for them to make a grave, so they buried him in a cave in a mountain. The whole crew now consisted of only sixteen persons, and of these there was often one ill. Towards the end of September, the cold was so intense, that the men were obliged to relinquish the building of the hut, because their limbs were absolutely transfixed with cold; and the floating wood which they used in its construction was covered with

snow. In order, however, to forward the work a little, they took the wood of the hammocks out of the ship, to make a roof, and otherwise furnish the hut. This employed them fifteen days, during which the cold was so dreadful, that the strongest sailors could not go thirty steps without risking their lives. Meanwhile the vessel remained in the same desperate situation; the nights became longer, and the condition of the poor voyagers still more pitiable.

CHAPTER V.

A winter passed at Nova Zembla.—A singular phenomenon.

IT was about the 12th of October when part of the crew prepared to lodge in the hut, which was almost completed; but they had nothing to lie upon, neither could they light a fire, for there was no chimney. Only consider, my

young readers, what these poor people must have suffered ! and yet they supported their fate with patience and firmness. They continued to render the cabin more commodious, by taking from the ship whatever was useful ; and thus, as much as possible, alleviated their misery. Amongst the provisions, the preservation of which much concerned them, there were some casks of beer : of this luxury they thought they should have been deprived, for in conveying it to the hut, the beer was metamorphosed into ice, so that the casks, even those bound with iron, burst. They were not, however, on this account, the less careful of their icy beer, although they found, from the first attempt, that in melting it at the fire it lost all its flavour and strength.

On the 24th the remainder of the crew, in number eight, went to the hut ; one poor man was obliged to be drawn upon a sledge, being too ill to go without assistance. They drew the long-boat also with incredible labour to the hut, for every hope of a future deliverance rested on it, in case they should live

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through the long and severe winter. It was in vain to think any more of preserving the large vessel,—it was fixed in the ice. The agreeable light of the sun still shone upon them for a few hours in the day; but this blessing, the only thing that gave them any consolation, was soon to leave them. The segment of a circle which this orb described above the horizon, every day became smaller, and now it did not rise more than a hand's breadth above it; of course the sailors made the best of their time in carrying the rest of the provision, the sails, and cordage, to the hut. The last time that a party of them went to the vessel for this purpose, one of them saw three bears coming, and set up a great shout to frighten them. The sailors immediately left the ropes by which they had dragged the sledge, and fled for safety to the vessel; but Heemskirk and another previously armed themselves with halberds, which they found upon the sledge, and, going to the opposite side of the ship, successfully got on board. The others provided themselves with

fire-arms; but these were so much out of order that they were of no use. Meanwhile the furious animals made every attempt to climb up the vessel; and would no doubt have succeeded, had they not been diverted by lumps of wood and other things which the sailors threw at them, and which they, like dogs that are taught to fetch and carry, always ran after. At last, one of the crew threw a halberd at the largest, which struck him so forcibly in the snout, that he was obliged to retire; and the two smaller ones followed him, so that now the sailors were at liberty to return to the hut. A few days after, they caught a white fox, which they roasted, and found to have nearly the same flavour as a rabbit.

On the 4th of November following, the sun did not shine at all; and this was the beginning of the long night of which they could hardly hope to see the end. But, as all-merciful Providence mingles in every cup of grief some drops of consolation, so to this evil He conjoined some circumstances well adapted to render it less frightful; for from the day when

the sun disappeared, the bears migrated, apparently to pass their winter in a more southerly region: the moon also, taking place of the sun, made the tour of the horizon without setting: and the sky was most frequently illuminated by brilliant northern lights, which rendered it as clear as it is with us on a cloudy day. All these things consoled our poor friends, and recompensed them in some degree for the absence of the pleasant daylight. But now there was a difficulty in distinguishing the seasons of day and night, especially when a cloudy sky concealed from them the situation of the moon and stars. They had brought a clock from the vessel, but the violence of the cold prevented it from going. Fortunately they had also brought a sand-glass which would run twelve hours without being turned: this they turned very regularly, in order that they might know at what point of time they were. They made also a lamp, which, as they had no oil, they supplied from the fat of a bear.

On the 6th of November the cold rose to

such a degree, that it was no longer possible for them to keep themselves warm. The largest fire they could keep in the hut was only sufficient to prevent the Spanish wine which they had brought with them from freezing, a thing which, from its natural heat, very seldom happens. The fire appeared to have lost all its power; the objects placed near it did not feel its effect: when they held their feet towards it till they were actually burnt, they were little sensible of its presence. The whole company was seated round it in the silence of despair, casting one upon the other looks of anguish and compassion, in full expectation that the cold would shortly put an end to their miserable existence.

On the day following, the cold not having diminished in the least degree, it was resolved to go to the ship in search of coal, which would give more heat than wood, and would not burn so fast. With difficulty they brought it to the hut, and in the evening made so large a fire, that the room was really warm: *this* gave them much pleasure, and they

sought every means to preserve and increase it. They stopped up the chimney just as they were getting into bed, and conversed for some time longer in better temper than ever; but their gaiety soon passed away: they began to feel themselves very ill, a giddiness came upon them, and they were unable to raise themselves. Two of them, however, had just strength enough to crawl to the chimney and door to open them. He who opened the door fainted, and fell with his face in the snow; fortunately for him, for the cold of the snow, the fresh air, and a little vinegar with which they sprinkled him, restored his senses. The cold air which entered the hut saved all their lives. You see, my young readers, what gave rise to this accident; it was the vapours of the charcoal. Such vapours have already cost many their lives. It was only the other night, that two young peasants were suffocated from having taken a pan of coals into their chamber to warm their bed. What a lesson do these examples teach my young friends! Always beware of concentrated vapours of

every kind, but especially those of coals! Do not suffer it in your apartments, nor permit the chimney of your stove to be closed up whilst lighted coals are used in the room. Many people die suddenly of apoplectic fits, as it is thought; but, if the case be examined more closely, it will be found perhaps, that in some cases death is occasioned by circumstances of this sort. Always think of it, my young friends, and never suffer similar neglects, at least in the apartment you are allowed to call your own.

Now I am going to pass over the history of the many days during which these mariners suffered similar hardships and miseries, and to mention only the most remarkable events which occurred to them. Amongst these I number the exact division of food which they appointed, and the invention of a trap, in which they caught several foxes. Their flesh was good to eat, and with their skins they made caps and other articles of clothing. The surgeon of the ship formed a bath in a great cask, where he compelled the men to



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bathe from time to time: this contributed much to re-establish the health of the sick, and to preserve that of the healthy.

It sometimes happened that the hut was covered with snow, so that it was a difficult matter to open a passage to the air. Often, even within-side the hut, their shoes froze to their feet, so that they could not wear them without first covering their feet with skins, and then putting on three or four pair of stockings, so as to preserve at least some heat. As for their beds, sometimes the only means of preventing them from freezing, was to warm them with heated stones, which they gave to one another in turn.

It was in this manner that they ended the year 1596; and the beginning of 1597 was equally miserable. Their provisions were considerably diminished, and they were obliged to come to another diminution of their daily portion, although the dreadful cold daily increased their appetite. Notwithstanding this, these unfortunate people did not lose courage; habit alleviated their sufferings, and

the possibility of being delivered when the winter was over, gave them new strength to support them.

On the 5th of January, in the evening, they recollected that it was a festival-day. Having spent it in hard labour, opening a passage through the snow to look for wood, and cleaving it, they wished to enjoy some little recreation; and the captain, willing to consent as far as possible, gave them two pounds of flour and a little oil, to make a sort of pancake. What a luxury did it appear to them! what joy did it spread amongst them! Ye who require ten or twenty exquisite dainties to satisfy your unruly appetites, think of this joyous repast upon two pounds of flour and a little oil! mark how little is necessary to satisfy and cheer unvitiated tastes, and beware how you corrupt the simplicity of nature, which is the best promoter of happiness. Our sober mariners enjoyed themselves more this evening than you commonly do at your most sumptuous repasts: they carried their cheerfulness so far as to elect a king

amongst them, as was the custom on the day of this festival. The lot fell upon the master-gunner, who became from this day the King of Nova Zembla; that is to say, of a country which is nearly four hundred leagues in circumference. By degrees they observed that the day and night, which hitherto had appeared confounded, began to separate and become distinct; they perceived also a glow in the sky, which seemed to foretell the rising of the sun: this gave them no small pleasure. The days too were not altogether so cold as heretofore; for when they made up a good fire in the hut, great pieces of ice fell from the walls, and melted: this they had never seen before, even with the largest fires. From this time they went out every day, and exercised themselves in walking, throwing stones, &c., to make their limbs pliant.

On the 24th of January, being a fine day, Captain Heemskirk went to the coast with two companions, to survey the ice. Suddenly, one of them discovered a part of the disc of the sun appearing above the horizon. The joy

which these good people felt is beyond all description: they ran in haste to announce the good news in the hut. All heard it with rapture. Barenz alone, who understood something of astronomy, shook his head, and doubted the truth of the circumstance; because, according to his calculations, the sun would not be visible for fifteen days:—how could it be then? Three days after, the full sun, in all his grandeur and beauty, appeared above the horizon, darting his delightful rays upon this icy region. What a sight for our mariners! their hearts beat with joy. Barenz was surprised; he calculated again, and still found that the sun shone not according to the common order of nature. He convinced his companions of the rectitude of his calculations, and all were as astonished as himself. Their eyes certified that the sun was there, and astronomy proved that it could not be there: which were they to believe—their reason, or their eyes? Superstitious people would have come more easily to the explanation of this phenomenon: “It is a miracle,” they would

have exclaimed: "it is for the love of us that God has altered the course of Nature, and has commanded the sun to hasten his career, that he might shew himself to us the sooner."

Suppose, my young readers, that you had been present there, and had seen the sun with your own eyes, and had known by the light of your understandings that Barenz's calculations were just; what would you have said? I think I see into your minds,—you would have been much embarrassed. I will tell you frankly what I should have thought. I should have said to myself, "I know not whether my understanding or my senses deceive me, but this I know, that I have no reason to think that the Creator, great and wise as he is, would, for the love of me, interrupt the order of his creation. What am I, and what are a hundred other such, in comparison with the infinite number of creatures in the world, that we should imagine, that for us God would disturb the beautiful order of the immense machine of the earth, and work miracles in favour of so few, without having any

object of general benevolence? To regard as a miracle any thing which I cannot explain, I must first see clearly some great and sublime object which the Creator might have in view; but, not seeing such, I would rather regard my incomprehension of the phenomenon as a consequence of my ignorance, than as any thing supernatural. What I could not understand, others, more wise and learned than myself, might explain to me. I would consult them when I had an opportunity; and until then, I would leave the matter undecided. Barenz himself was apparently of this opinion; for I do not find in his journal, that he regarded this circumstance as a miracle; but he did not fail to note it down, that he might consult able astronomers about it, if it pleased Heaven to bring him back to Holland. In this he did well, for, without this precaution, the fact would perhaps have remained unknown. Now, if any of us saw a similar event, we should perhaps be able to explain it: we can even imitate this miracle in

our own room if we please,—but in miniature, to be sure. Take a tea-cup and put a small silver coin into it; then place yourself so that you can just see the middle of the cup, but not the piece of silver; well, then let somebody fill the cup with water. On a sudden you see the bottom of the cup—you see the piece of silver which you did not see before. How comes that about?

Those of you who already understand a little of natural philosophy know the reason; the others I will inform in a general way, that this singular phenomenon proceeds from the refraction of the rays of light: of this they will know more when they begin to learn this agreeable science. Thus much I should tell you; that every time the rays of light pass from a less dense matter into that which is more so—for instance, from air into water,—they change their direction, and are bent or refracted; and when this is the case, the objects which are enlightened appear in a different situation from that they really oc-

cupy.* Thus, you see, the piece of silver appears in the centre of the cup, though it is really at the bottom. In order, therefore, the more easily to conceive that the rays of the sun, in passing into the dense air of our atmosphere, are refracted, it is only necessary to know that the air which immediately surrounds our globe, is much more dense than that above it. In the rising of the sun we see his image whilst he is still beneath the horizon; and in his setting, we see his image after he has gone down.

Do you not now understand why our people at Nova Zembla saw the sun rise fifteen days before the time which the astronomical calculations of Barenz appointed? This astronomer was right. He calculated the true situation of the sun; but the eyes of his com-

* The young reader may be made to observe the different situation which that part of an oar, in rowing, which is beneath the surface of the water, appears to occupy, from that which is above it. The oar in the water appears broken or bent.

panions would not be deceived any longer, for they saw what they were sure was the orb itself, but which was only the image of the orb. What then is there miraculous in this? Behold how the idle stories of fairies and spirits vanish, when the light of reason shines upon them!

CHAPTER VI.

*Continuation of the residence at Nova Zembla.—
Preparations for departure.*

No rose without a thorn; no joy without grief. This is a proverb of which the whole of human life proves the truth, and our friends at Nova Zembla verified it; for at the same time that they were cheered by the light of the sun, they were depressed by the loss of one of their companions, who had been an invalid for a long time;—with sorrow did they bury him in the snow. At this time also the bears

returned; and the foxes, whose company they had had till now, gave place to them. The weather, generally speaking, was milder; but the cold often returned with new force. In the middle of February it was more insupportable than ever. This unexpected return would have discouraged all our crew, had not the hope of being finally delivered from their misery re-animated them.

Their great care was always to have a plentiful supply of wood; but this it was often a difficult matter to find and convey to the hut; for they were obliged not only to go to a distance to look for it, but also to drag it over lofty mountains, on which the snow was as deep as the hut was high. What, indeed, is there beyond the power of man, when he is courageous, and when necessity urges him? One evening, whilst they were resting after a hard day's labour, a bear came up to the hut, announcing its presence and intentions by a hideous growling. All leaped up to take their fire-arms; but when they tried to shoot, unfortunately, the powder being damp, not one

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of the muskets would go off. The monster meanwhile descended through the snow, and came to the door to break it open; but Heemskirk stood against it, and held it so firmly that he could not effect his purpose. After many fruitless attempts he went away; but, as if he had changed his mind, he soon returned, mounted upon the roof of the hut, and growled in such a dreadful manner, that they were all very much frightened. He clung to the chimney, making every effort to throw it down; and indeed they expected every moment that it would tumble into the hut. Only conceive, my young readers, what our mariners must have felt at this time! But Providence, on this as on all other occasions, was watchful of their preservation. The bear was obliged to renounce his enterprise; but, before he retired, he tore the sail with which the hut was covered, and in other respects did much mischief. The cold continued severe until the 15th of April. On this day they went to visit the vessel, and found it in the same hopeless situation in which they had

left it. The ice around it had acquired an enormous thickness, and presented the most singular appearance. In one place might be seen a tower rearing its head aloft; in another there appeared to be streets lined with houses; in another there were bulwarks and a rampart; farther off the sea appeared breaking through the ice, and making way for itself. At this sight hope was kindled in the minds of all. But Heemskirk had resolved to wait till the end of the month of May, that he might not be reproached with having too hastily renounced the hope of saving the vessel, through an excessive care for his own preservation. The end of May arrived; but the vessel still remained blocked up. The ice which held it seemed to be attached to the bottom of the sea, for it remained immovable, whilst the distant ice was breaking, and hurried away by the wind. Now the captain ordered his men to drag the long-boat, and the smaller one, from under the snow in which they were buried, that they might equip them, as well as they could, for the long

and dangerous voyage they were about to undertake. These were no unpleasant sounds in the ears of our sailors, who would have undergone almost any thing, rather than pass their lives in this gloomy region of eternal winter: but they had lost nearly all their strength, and it required the greatest exertion to dig the two vessels out of the snow. Often their implements fell from their hands; but these words of the captain sounded like thunder in their ears, and gave them energy to do what would otherwise have been impracticable. "If," said he, "you do not wish to remain inhabitants of Nova Zembla, and be buried in these snows, you must put these vessels in order, for it is upon them that every hope of deliverance is founded."

The whole month however passed away whilst they were refitting them; and often were they in imminent danger of being devoured by the ferocious bears which attacked them.

Sometimes the weather grew milder, and the sea began to be free; but frequently a

single blast from the North would bring back the most dreadful cold, and cover the whole sea with ice. For the first days of June, they were employed in sliding the boats over the ice towards the vessel, that when every thing was ready they might slide them still further to the end of the ice, and launch them into the water. The following days were employed in clearing the hut, and conveying to the vessel, which was about half the distance to the clear sea, every thing that might be of use to them in their dangerous voyage. During this work, they were surprised by a violent storm of snow, hail, and rain mixed. It was so dreadful, that they were obliged to leave every thing, and seek for safety in the hut; but this did not shelter them much, for they had used the roof in refitting the vessels, and there was nothing but an extended sail to cover them: so the rain entered on all sides, and the hut was filled with water. The poor fellows bore this trial with patience, and the next day continued their work.



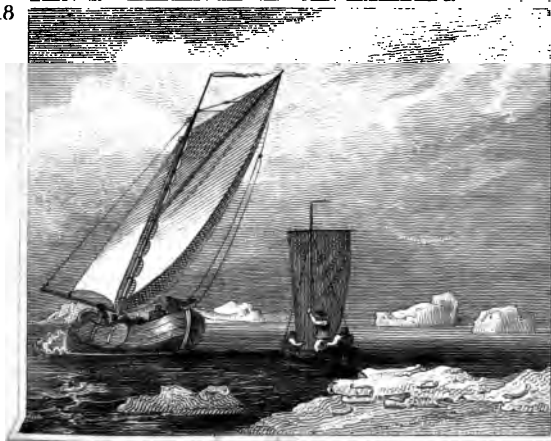
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On the 11th of June, they were threatened with a new misfortune, the most grievous that could befall them. All their provisions, and every thing indispensably necessary for their voyage, were on board the vessel, and the boats in which they were to sail were beside it, when suddenly there arose a tempest so violent, that they thought every minute the ice would break, and the vessel sink with all its contents. Had this happened, there would have been no other means of preservation; but providentially the tempest went off.

The only work that remained to be done, namely, to drag the vessels to the water-side, was undertaken with alacrity, though certainly it was not the least difficult. The ice had formed, as we have seen, mountains and valleys, and the former had to be levelled before the boats could be got over. The sailors went cheerfully to the business with their axes and hatchets, and soon finished it. Whilst at work, they had a furious battle with a bear, which they vanquished. Barenz and Captain Heemskirk had meanwhile written

an account of their adventures up to this time; one copy they put into a box and left in the vessel, to serve as a notice to those who might hereafter be cast upon these shores. They had described the place where their hut stood, and had mentioned by what means they had subsisted for ten months in this cold region. Paying every regard to the duties of humanity, our mariners were desirous that none should suffer as they had done; the misfortunes which they experienced, only rendered them the more compassionate, and inclined them to every action which humanity could dictate. Such is the case with us all, and this is one reason perhaps why Divine Goodness afflicts his creatures. Heemskirk afterwards placed a copy in each of the boats, in order that if one should perish, and the other arrive safely at the continent, it might add credit to the story of the crew: he made his companions sign them, to authenticate them still better.

The boats were at last launched, and their cargoes prepared: every thing that the wet could injure was carefully wrapped up in

sails dipped in pitch, so that the water could not pierce through. The whole cargo consisted of six bales of fine cloth, one chest of linen, two bales of velvet, two small casks full of money, two casks of cordage and linen for the crew, three casks of biscuits, one of cheese, one of bacon, two of oil, six of wine, and two of vinegar, besides the clothes of the crew. There was but just room in the vessels for all these things.

CHAPTER VII.

Departure from Nova Zembla.—Very great dangers and difficulties.

It was on the 14th of June, 1597, that our mariners set sail. There were at this time two invalids, Barenz, and a sailor; one was put into one boat, and the other into the other, that they might be better taken care of, and that the attentions of the crew might be divided between them. Cheerfully and coura-

geously did they begin this voyage, which, probably, had not had its equal in dangers since the creation of the world. Their undertaking was nothing less than to sail more than three hundred and fifty leagues in two wretched boats, without cover, in a climate too, which in the midst of summer is as severe as our winter, and in seas where masses of ice, sometimes adhering, sometimes torn asunder by the wind, crash one against another. One cannot but be astonished at the greatness of this enterprise, undertaken by people whose strength was so much wasted by foregoing fatigues.

The spot, you know, where they had passed the winter, was upon the eastern coast of the island. The shorter way to reach the continent from thence would have been to steer along this coast towards the south-east; but Heemskirk chose the longer, I do not know why—perhaps he had reason to think that the sea would be freer on the western coast of Nova Zembla than on the other. He resolved to sail directly to the North, and double the

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northern point, (which is called the "Icy Cape,") and not to steer to the South until he came to the other side of this land.

They had not proceeded far northward, before they were so inclosed by ice, that they could proceed no farther. An unfortunate beginning, which superstitious people would have regarded as a bad omen: but our friends the Dutch were men, and not old women; so it had no effect upon them. They cast anchor on the ice, and waited until it should again be in movement and make way for them. Meanwhile they employed themselves in melting snow at the fire, to procure fresh water. Thus, instead of allowing themselves to be discouraged from their undertaking by this first obstacle, they, on the contrary, endeavoured to take advantage of it; was not this acting rationally? Before long, they were able to continue their voyage; the wind was favourable, and the rowers exerted themselves so much, that on the third day they reached the northern extremity of Nova Zembla. The poor invalids every day grew worse, though Barenz,

when asked how he was? always answered "that he was better, and hoped soon to recover." He asked "if they had got to the Icy Cape," and being told they were then near it, he desired to be raised up, that he might look at it. On the following day, as they were sailing between lumps of ice, some of them came with such violence against the boats, that the crew were very much terrified, expecting every blow to shatter them in pieces. The current carried them with such impetuosity, that it was impossible to avoid them, or keep them off by means of poles, and there were so many of them that the boats could not make any way through them. Now the boldest lost their courage. All believed themselves lost, and already began to take their last farewell. One only mean of safety was before them; but all their efforts to attain it were useless. There was at a little distance, a bank of firm ice, of sufficient strength to shelter them from the floating masses; but it did not appear possible to reach it with their boats. But see, my young

friends, how one man of courage and resolution can frequently preserve many others from destruction. One of the crew, by name Van Veer, who on other occasions had shewn himself remarkable for his courage, now resolved to risk his life to save that of the rest. With one end of the cable in his hand, he leaped out of the vessel, and leaping like a frog from one piece of ice to another, at length, contrary to all expectation, arrived safely at the firm pieces: then drawing the rope, the boats, which were fastened together, yielded to his exertions, and reached the wished-for harbour.

Their first care was that of the sick. They carried them on to the ice in blankets, and placed something under them to lie down upon. Then they unloaded the boats, that they might lift them on to the ice and repair them, for they were a good deal injured. Then they went on the land to which this ice was attached, to look for bird's eggs for the invalids, but only caught a few birds. The next day they beheld the whole sea, far and near, covered with ice. This was a sad and discour-

raging prospect, and it appeared as if they had come thus far only to render their state more deplorable, and to increase their misery. Those who were well almost envied Andriff, their sick companion, when they saw him draw near his end; for they thought he would soon be happy, and delivered from all his misery. Barenz, hearing them speak, said his death also was at hand; but as he was occupied in examining a map of their route, drawn up by Van Veer, they did not think him so ill as he said; and they conversed on other subjects. Barenz soon laid the map aside, and asked for some drink; but hardly had he swallowed it, when suddenly, leaning his head, he expired, to the great regret of his companions. In him they lost a brave comrade, and a skilful pilot: upon him, in this latter character, they had founded, in great measure, their hope of success in this dangerous enterprise. A little while after, the sailor Andriff expired also. They were obliged to remain four days in this disagreeable situation, because the ice with which the sea was

covered was immovable as a wall. On the fifth day, however, the 22d of June, there arose a south-east wind, which unshackled the sea. Forthwith our sailors packed up every thing in the boats, and dragged them about fifty steps to the water; but hardly had they set them afloat, when with much labour, they were obliged again to drag them over some ice which impeded their progress, until at last they came to navigable water. Here they continued to sail, but not without meeting new interruptions.

On the 25th, as the vessels were lying anchored by a mass of ice, a violent storm arose; the ice broke into several pieces and separated, so that the little boats were carried into the high sea, in constant danger either of being broken by the ice, or overturned by the tempest. The crew exerted their utmost efforts to regain the coast, and, not being able to effect it by their oars alone, they ventured to put up the foresail; but the mizen-mast broke, and they were obliged to have recourse to the great sail, that they might be able to

keep up with the other boat, and not be left alone in the wide ocean at the mercy of the waves. Hardly had they unfurled this, when a violent gust of wind caught it, and would undoubtedly have overturned the vessel, had they not lowered it immediately. Already the canoe began to let in water on all sides, and the crew imagined themselves lost beyond recovery; but notwithstanding this, they preserved a sufficient presence of mind to consult means of preservation in this awful crisis. Suddenly the storm which came from the south abated, and a gentle breeze blew up from the north-east. This favoured their return to the firm ice on the coast, whither they arrived in safety.

But when they looked round for the long-boat they could not see her any where; hoping, however, that it was the mist that blinded them, they continued to sail beside the ice. Still not seeing her, they were beginning to fear she was lost, when Van Veer, who commanded the canoe, fired some cannon-shots;



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these, they were glad to hear, were answered by others in return. By this means, which had often before proved successful on similar occasions, the vessels found one another again. They then continued their dangerous voyage ; and on the following day passed a plain of ice covered with an immense number of sea-cows. Never before had they seen so many of these animals together. It would not have been worth while to give them the chase, if such a thought had entered the minds of our navigators. They contented themselves with killing some birds which they saw, and which were more valuable.

On the 28th, finding themselves again beside a bank of ice, and much incommoded by the floating masses, they cast anchor, and having emptied the boats, drew them upon the ice, where they made a tent of sails, and lay down, having previously stationed one as a sentinel. This precaution was no unnecessary one ; for presently their comrades saw three large white bears approaching, which

would have dealt great destruction amongst his companions, if they had not been warned of the danger that threatened them. They immediately killed one of those monsters, and the two others made their escape; but on the following day they returned: one of them seized his dead companion with his teeth, and dragged him to a great distance, where both set-to to devour him. The men fired at them, and they abandoned their prey. Four of them went up to the spot, and, to their great surprise, found that in that short time, they had devoured the half of this great animal. These four men were scarcely able to carry the remaining half, and one single bear had dragged the whole body. This circumstance proves the enormous strength of these animals.

As the wind blew violently from the East on this and the two following days, they were obliged to remain upon the ice. During this time they had frequent attacks from bears, which their vigilance and courage always repelled.

The night of the 1st of July was one of the most awful and dangerous they had yet experienced. About nine o'clock in the evening, a violent east wind drove the floating ice with such force against the firm, that the part upon which the crew were was detached and set afloat. The greatest misfortune was, that all the bales and casks which were upon the ice when it broke, rolled into the water. But this was not all. The boats were just upon that side of the ice which was exposed to the sea, and therefore were in imminent danger of being smashed or overturned with all their contents. It was necessary, therefore, to drag them as quickly as possible to the opposite side of the ice, towards the land; but during this work the ice broke a hundred times under their feet; the canoe, and those who were dragging it, were carried away; the mast broke, and the whole boat was so much injured by the blows of the ice, that it let in water. The men were obliged to escape from one piece of the floating ice to another, and at the same time to draw the

canoe along with them. Unfortunately there was still an invalid, whom his brave companions would not desert, though each had enough to do to save his own life. Seeing him in manifest danger of perishing, they took him on their shoulders, and leaped from one piece of ice to another, until at last they reached the sloop. Behold, my young readers, what the spirit of humanity can effect! Whilst the voluptuous rich man, out of the hardness of his heart, can scarcely prevail upon himself to throw to a famished brother one morsel of his superfluity, or to cover his nakedness with a useless garment, these poor sailors, weakened by hunger, cold, and misery, risked all they had, their lives, to save a sick companion, who was a trouble to them, and whose life, they thought, could not last long. This is worthy to be termed humanity. This would form a spectacle capable of making angels weep with joy. Providence blessed the deed: they succeeded, contrary to all expectation, not only in the saving their lives, and that of their invalid, but also their boats;

and drew them up again upon the firm ice. They recovered also many of their bales and casks;—the tempest ceased, and, after the storm, came fine weather.

CHAPTER VIII.

Continuation of their dangerous voyage along the coast of Nova Zembla.—Description of the Samojedes.—Safe arrival upon the coast of Russia.

WHILST one half of the crew was occupied in refitting the vessels which had suffered so much, the other half went on shore to look for wood, and particularly for a tree to supply the place of their mast. They were fortunate enough to find both, and also some cleaved wood, with wedges lying beside it: from this they concluded that there had been some human beings there. Ah! how were their hearts cheered to observe this, and what haste did they make to shew these wedges to their

companions ! It is true, some Russian whale-fishermen had anchored upon this coast a few years before ; but the simple idea of being in a place which other men had visited before gave them joy. So true is it that God has united men together by the invisible but sacred ties of nature, so that they desire one another's company, and each is dear to the other, though they cannot render each other mutual service ! On the 5th of July, the sick sailor, of whom his comrades had taken such humane care, died. It was not till the 9th that the ice broke : immediately the boats were re-loaded, and now again they set sail. I fear it would tire my young readers were I to continue to detail, as I have hitherto done, every obstacle that opposed the progress of these unfortunate people. In fact, there were always the same scenes, the same miseries, the same dangers which I have already so often described. Sometimes masses of ice threatened their boats ; sometimes it was necessary to drag them over great banks to put them again into free water ; sometimes bears

attacked them; sometimes herds of sea-cows pursued them, threatening to devour them with their long teeth. All this, then, I think it will be better to pass over, and I will beg of my young readers to follow me to the southern extremity of Nova Zembla, and to attend whilst I tell them some particulars of a singular race of men who repair to this place from the continent, during the summer months, for the purpose of hunting: they are called the Samojedes. This extensive tribe inhabits a vast tract of land in European and Asiatic Russias, on the coasts of the Frozen Ocean. It forms a part of that race of men, whom they call Polar men, and who inhabit the regions round about the Arctic Pole: as the Esquimaux in America; the Greenlanders; the Laplanders, in Norwegian Lapland; the Swedes and Russians, the Samojedes, and the Ostiacks or Baschirs, who live in Asiatic Russia.

Like the other inhabitants of the Polar regions, the Samojedes are low in stature, being chiefly four feet high, and their skins

of a dirty yellow colour; their limbs are short, their heads large, their countenance mean and disagreeable, their eyes small, their ears large, their noses flat, with wide nostrils, wide mouths, with teeth small and ugly, and unwieldy bodies, with thin lean legs and arms; their hair is black, and hangs like packthread over their shoulders. The men have little or no beard, but it is not decided whether naturally, or because they shave it. It is difficult to distinguish the men from the women, for both in figure and dress, they resemble each other; except that the women, or, as some say, only the young girls, knot their hair in two or three tresses, and let it hang so. All of them wear a kind of skate upon their feet, which is frequently as long as the little men themselves are high. Beneath this they fasten a piece of rein-deer's skin; this prevents them from slipping back when they are climbing up mountains of ice and snow, and the skate helps them to go faster. Their winter clothes are made of the skins of rein-deer, which they sew together with the sinews of the animal: their

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summer ones are made of the skins of penguins with the feathers remaining on them. Their handkerchiefs are made of the soft bark of the birch-tree, and they always carry one about them.

Neither sex ever washes or bathes, so they are abominably filthy: their huts, made of skins and bark of trees, have an insupportable stench. Any carcase of a horse or other animal which they find, they will eat raw; they will drink also the blood of rein-deer, however warm from the veins.

It is customary amongst them for a man to take as many wives as he pleases; but they seldom take more than five, and generally only two. They buy them from their fathers with rein-deer, and we are assured that for some they pay one hundred, or more. They may put them away when they please, but they never get the price back again that they have given. In the rein-deer their whole riches consist; its skin in summer, and its flesh in winter, supply all their wants, along with a few fish, which they eat also raw. They believe in a Supreme Being and a powerful

Evil Spirit; but they worship neither: besides this they have household gods, which they consult sometimes, but I know not in what manner. The sun and the moon too they consider as inferior divinities; and of the immortality of the soul they have some idea, but they believe in its transmigration. All are of equal rank, except that the old men are honoured more than the others; consequently they have no sovereign, no laws, but only pay a tribute of furs to the Russian government. One would think their mode of life very miserable; but they are, nevertheless, extremely happy, and would not exchange their lot for that of any other people; no, not even for that of a civilized nation: it is because they have no cares nor desires beyond what they can satisfy themselves. My young friends, imitate them in this. Accustom yourselves to a simple and frugal life, that you may have few cares, and acquire useful talents, that will enable you to procure what is necessary; and then you will not envy the state of your companions.

It is now time to see what is become of our friends the Dutchmen.

It was upon the 3d of August, after having undergone innumerable hardships, that they at last reached the southern extremity of this desolate region: all weakened beyond expression; all attacked with the scurvy, which threatened to exterminate them before they could reach the continent. But there is a proverb equally true and consoling; "that the Divine assistance is the most extended in the seasons of the greatest misery." This is what they experienced; for when they landed for the last time, they found a quantity of herbs, which they knew were an excellent remedy against their complaint, and which they might eat in their natural state: so they ate heartily, and the effect surpassed their highest expectations. Before this their teeth were loosened, so that they could not eat biscuit; but now they could eat what they pleased, or rather what they had, and that was not much, their provisions being very nearly consumed.

They now prepared to pass the Weygate Strait, in order to gain the neighbouring continent. At first the passage was tolerable; but the nearer they approached the land, the more ice there was; so that they were frequently penned in, and obliged to regain the open sea. On the 4th they saw the coasts of Russia, and on the 5th they reached them. They went on shore to find some provisions, if possible; but the country was desert, and produced nothing but grass, and a few wild shrubs.

Some of them expressed a wish to continue their journey by land; but they were still so far from Kola (a small town in the White Sea, where they expected to find a Dutch ship), the country was so barren, and their strength so exhausted, that they resolved to pursue their voyage in the two boats.

On account of the shortness of provisions, some of them were induced to bring a dead sea-cow, which they found upon the ice; but, as they were going to eat it, the others prevented them, knowing that so strange a meal

must shorten their lives : they therefore contented themselves with a piece of mouldy biscuit, and continued their route.

CHAPTER IX.

Navigation towards the White Sea.—Description of the Laplanders.—Safe Return to Amsterdam.

ON the 12th they had the pleasure of seeing a Russian bark coming full sail towards them. The boats soon joined, and Heemskirk went on board. He asked them what distance they were off Candenos, an island at the entrance of the White Sea? but the Russians did not understand him. They concluded, however, from the word Candenos, that the master of this vessel wanted to know in what direction he was to steer, in order to arrive there; so they brought a compass, and shewed him what direction to follow. Heemskirk then took a piece of silver in his hand, and pointed with

the other to a cask of fish which stood upon the bark. The Russians understood him ; they took the piece of silver, and gave him in return two hundred fish, with some small cakes. The poor half-starved Dutchmen were well pleased with the purchase, and hastened to enjoy it. The whole was divided into equal parts, permitting every one to do with his own share what he thought proper.

On the 18th a violent tempest arose, which separated the two boats. Hardly was it calm, when a thick mist absolutely removed every possibility of their being re-united. Heemskirk was in the small boat, and approached the coast as near as possible. Full of anxiety for their companions, they continued to sail four days in quest of them, when at length they met another Russian bark : the crew of this offered them a loaf of their own accord, which they accepted with gratitude. The Russians wanted to make them understand that they had seen their comrades to the number of seven, in a sloop ; but, when they found that the Dutch could not comprehend them, they

raised seven fingers, and pointed at the same time to the canoe, indicating that they had seen seven men in an open boat like theirs: this they understood, and the captain having made them explain by signs in what direction they were gone, set full sail, and with all the oars hastened to join them.

On the 18th, they at last gained the object of their long and ardent desires, the Cape of the Island of Candenos, situated at the entrance of the White Sea; but, alas! as yet there was no intelligence of the long boat. There was still a dangerous voyage to perform. From this cape, it was necessary to cross the White Sea, in a billowy ocean, and high wind, in order to arrive at the western coast inhabited by the Laplanders. This was a voyage of seventy leagues; hazardous indeed to inexperienced mariners, but to those who had surmounted so many difficulties, nothing very dreadful. In thirty hours they accomplished it, and in their passage discovered some small huts upon the coast. Here they landed, and found them inhabited by thirteen

Russians, two Laplanders, their wives, and a child. The life of the Russians was simple, but that of the Laplanders still more so. The former lived upon the fish which they caught every day, whilst the latter were obliged to be content with the fragments and heads that were thrown to them, and these they ate with as much submission as dogs. Our mariners were deeply affected; they, who had themselves been so long in misery, were struck with compassion when they saw others suffer. It was useless, however, to express this sentiment, because they had it not in their power in the least degree to ameliorate the lot of these poor Laplanders.

The thread of our history having conducted us into a country where the Laplanders live scattered, I hope my young readers will allow me to give a short description of them.

The Laplanders, in many respects, resemble the Samojedes (of whom we have spoken), as well in mode of life as in figure, but appear to approach rather nearer to civilized nations. They, like them, are of a dirty



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brown colour, arising from the filth and smoke in which they live. Their hair is black and short, their faces broad, their cheeks sunk, their chins pointed, their mouths wide, and their eyes bleared. As for their mode of life, they have neither agriculture, trade, nor manufactures, nor are they willing to learn anything. The care of their herds is almost their only occupation; and the only species of animal they breed, and which is all-sufficient for them, is the rein-deer. Of this I have spoken before. The profession of the Laplanders does not allow them to live always in the same country, but obliges them to lead a wandering life, seeking the northern regions in summer, and the southern in winter. Even if they are not inclined to remove, they are compelled, for their herds lead the way.

Their houses are so constructed as to be easily removed: they consist of stakes, set in a circular form, in such a way as to approach one another at the top. They are covered with thick Swedish cloth, or rein-deer skin, and if there be none of these, with

branches of fir-trees; and the interior is hung with all kinds of drapery. In the middle there is a hearth, and at the top an opening, which serves for both chimney and window. Twenty persons, perhaps, inhabit one of these huts, not caring so much for room as we who are accustomed to have each his own apartment. The chairs, couches, sofas, and beds of the Laplanders, are made of branches of pines and fir-trees, with skins laid over them. When they want to convey their effects from one country to another, they make use of a kind of sledge made like a little boat. The rein-deer, which they fasten to them, run more swiftly, and for a longer time, than our hares can, both in ascending and descending. It was formerly believed, that there was no need of a bridle to these animals, and that their masters had only to whisper in their ears where they wished to be carried; but this is now known to be a fiction, as are many other things which were credited in former times. The Laplander, when he wishes to go quickly, makes use of the same kind of

skate as the Samojede: it is a narrow plank, of three or four feet in length, curved and pointed before like the prow of a ship. One of these is fastened to each foot, and the man takes a stick in each hand with a horizontal wheel at the end, that it may not sink deep into the snow; by the help of these skates and sticks he glides along upon the top of the highest snow with such rapidity, that he can overtake the bears and wolves in their flight. The Samojedes, and the inhabitants of Norway and Finland also, make use of this ingenious means.

The Swedes and Danes have taken a great deal of pains to instruct the Laplanders in the Christian religion, but superstition and idolatry are very prevalent amongst them; and how can we be surprised, when we see so much amongst Christians themselves? It is particularly remarkable, that almost all ignorant people believe in one or more evil spirits, to which they attribute as much power as to the great God himself. They have less regard for Him than for these spirits, whose good-will

they esteem it of the greatest importance to secure. This is why they endeavour to the utmost of their power to please them, to appease them by all kinds of folly, to discover their wills, and to assure them of their assistance, using a variety of grimaces. This they denominate magic or witchcraft. Among the Laplanders, as amongst foolish people of every country, there have always been rogues, who have profited by the folly and superstitions of their countrymen, by passing themselves as magicians or sorcerers, capable of providing the help of these evil spirits, or of causing good or evil to fall upon other people. This at least is the fact, that no penal laws can extirpate superstition and folly; the best, and indeed the only means, is the giving a good education from childhood. All that severity can effect, is to oblige the superstitious to practise their absurd grimaces in secret, and to make them more tenacious of them, because they are forbidden. Only make them more reasonable, and their belief in magicians, spirits, and devils, will vanish without laws. See, my

young readers, what advantage you reap from reading relations of voyages. You learn here, for instance, what you ought henceforth to think of those who tell you of spirits, of magic, of conjurings, of miraculous cures, of treasures of gold to be discovered, &c. &c. You ought to esteem them either rogues or fools, and by no means lend them your ears or your purse. The more a country is deficient in the light of reason, the more will these stories be listened to; but, when reason and the sciences are cultivated, superstitions will vanish; no one will dare to expose them to the eyes of the public, and even those who are foolish enough to believe them, will be ashamed to avow them, because they will feel themselves rendered ridiculous by it. But let us return to the Laplanders.

There are many of them rich. Besides thousands of rein-deer, in which their chief wealth consists, they possess a variety of silver trinkets, such as rings, buckles, spoons, cups, &c. They now, too, know the use of money; but their wandering way of life often obliges

them to bury their precious effects, which, if they die on their travels, are seldom found again. The rich Laplanders wander in mountainous countries, where they find sufficient nourishment for their herds, and for this reason are called "Lapland mountaineers." Those who are not so rich in rein-deer, live in the woods, and feed principally upon fish and birds, or calves and sheep, and are called "Laplanders of the woods;" these latter are excellent archers. The rich man would rather pass the whole day sleeping in his hut than give himself any trouble about work; whilst the poor man applies himself to a hundred little arts, making sledges with all kinds of figures carved in horn or pewter, making spoons, coffers, boxes, fruit-baskets, bows, &c. &c. Thus it is that riches make a man slothful, and poverty, laborious and skilful. The wives of the Laplanders have the care of making clothes for the whole family, but have nothing to do with the kitchen; that is the man's department: in return, however, they

prepare the skins, and draw the pewter into a wire to adorn the harness and trappings of the sledges.

Marriages, with the Laplanders, are celebrated similarly to ours : it is not the young people themselves, but the parents who decide when and to whom they are to marry, and even then they do not regard whether they are suitable and can love one another, but only the portion of each. When the parents have made choice of a beautiful female, they go with their son, whether he likes it or not, to the house of her parents, taking care to provide themselves beforehand with some brandy. At first they begin by presenting it, and if it be accepted, it is a good sign : then they begin to bargain. The father of the young man shews the presents in silver and other property which he will give to the father and mother of the female, and her nearest relations ; and the father and mother of the girl, on their part, shew the dowry they mean to give with their daughter. If all this be

approved by both parties, the marriage is celebrated; if not, the parents of the female are obliged to return the brandy. On the day of the nuptials, each guest brings a mess of his own preparing; all these are collected together, and every one eats what he likes.

The children of the Laplanders are early accustomed to undergo every kind of hardship. When very young, they are put into a sort of cradle, and suspended from the roof of the hut in the smoke; two cords are fastened to the cradle, by which they sometimes put it in motion. In fact, we may say for these people, that they take every care to bring up their children in habits of industry.

Most of the Laplanders are under the dominion of the Swedes, some under the Danes, and others under the Russians. Those whom our Dutchmen found on the northern shores of the White Sea were of the number of these latter, and of the number of those whom misery obliges (merely to procure a scanty subsistence) to serve as slaves to some scat-

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tered Russians. But have we not said enough of them?—As soon as our friends had eaten their mess of bread and fish, which they found very good, they went on shore to look for some vegetables. The country was barren and uncultivated: they saw, however, at a distance, two men standing upon an eminence; these they concluded to be the Russians who had entertained them: satisfied with this idea, they made their way to the canoe.

The two men upon the eminence took the same route, and were not long before they reached the boat too; but who can describe the joy that warmed every breast upon seeing that these men were no others than their companions of the long-boat?—what shouts of joy! what congratulations! what marks of friendship did they exhibit! But you must represent this scene in your own minds: as for me, I will content myself with adding, that the long-boat with their other companions soon arrived, and that they celebrated the happy day of their re-union by a solemn repast, which they found more delicious than the

most excellent ragouts, though it consisted only of some bread and fish. Soon after they had set sail on the following day, they met some fishermen. The wind had prevented them from catching any thing, but these good people, seeing their want, threw them a cod-fish, without receiving any payment for it. Thus you see, my young readers, thanks be to all-merciful Providence! there are to be found under every zone, and in all states, people to whom the laws of humanity are sacred, and who act up to them with disinterested benevolence; and from this we may infer, though we see hundreds cruel and unjust, that all mankind are not so.

Our mariners continued their voyage, and towards evening met other fishermen, who asked them, in Russian, where was their crabbel? (a vessel.) They answered, in two Russian words which they had now learnt, "crabbel propal"—"our vessel is lost!" Then they said, "Cool brabante crabbel." From this they concluded that there were Dutch vessels at Kola; and this was a cause of no

little joy to them. They would have exerted themselves to the utmost to hasten their voyage, had not a violent wind obliged them to land. Here they found a small family of Laplanders in a miserable hut, who confirmed the tidings, that there were three Dutch vessels at Kola, two of which were upon the point of setting out. Fearing lest they should arrive there too late, they engaged a Laplander to conduct one of the sailors to Kola. This he did; and on the third day they saw him return, but without a companion. Whilst they were thus in anxiety, the Laplander gave a letter to Captain Heemskirk, which he hastily opened, and read nearly as follows: "How astonished was I to learn that you and your companions were still living! I had long since believed you all lost: and how happy am I to think that we shall all soon meet again!" The letter was signed "John Cornelius Ryp." At first all were elated with joy, seeing the contents of this letter, but afterwards they doubted who this Cornelius Ryp could be. "Perhaps it is not," said

they, "the captain of the vessel that set out with us from Holland, and left us at Spitzbergen." "That is impossible," said some: "how could he be still alive, when we, who did not go so far to the north, have scarcely escaped death?" The name, however, was the same. Fortunately Heemskirk recollected that he still possessed a letter which Cornelius had written to him upon a former occasion. He looked for it, compared both, and saw that they were written in the same hand. This was almost sufficient to banish from their minds the recollection of past misfortunes. All were exceedingly impatient to meet this man, and his companions, face to face.

At last the wished-for time arrived. A small boat appeared at a distance, and, as it approached, they recognized in it the mate Cornelius, and the sailor whom they had sent to him. They looked on all sides like men raised from the dead, and the joy was universal.

Cornelius had brought with him a cask of beer, with some wine, brandy, biscuits,

bacon, salmon, sugar, and other refreshments. These were particularly grateful, as our good friends had not tasted them for so long a time. When they had regaled themselves, they put out to sea in good heart, and on the second day reached Cornelius's vessel, which was at anchor about half a league from Kola, in a river of the same name. Here they had another repast, jovially spent in relating each other's adventures.

My readers, perhaps, will wish to know what fortune Cornelius Ryp and his people met with ; but I am sorry I cannot satisfy their desire, as I do not find any account of it. After the repast they proceeded to Kola, where they obtained permission of the Russian government to place their two boats in the Exchange, that they might remain as a monument of the long and surprising voyage they had made. Probably time has exercised its ravages upon them ; but it is possible, that to this day wrecks of them are to be seen.

On the 15th of September they weighed anchor, and reached Amsterdam without any

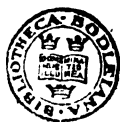
other adventure, on the 1st of November, 1597. They wore the same caps of white fox-skin, which they had brought from Nova Zembla. Their whole aspect, and the history of their adventures, caused no little astonishment there.

These books, an old clock, a copper dial, an old flute, a pair of shoes - and some other articles of this voyage were discovered and brought to Holland by Capt. Carls in 1671 -

See. Attermann. Nov. 16, 1572

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SURPRISING ADVENTURES
OF
FOUR RUSSIAN SAILORS
AT THE
Island of Spitzbergen.

IF the preceding Narrative has afforded pleasure to my young readers, I have little doubt but that the addition of one similar to it will not be unacceptable: it is as follows.

In the year 1743, a merchant of the town of Metzen, situated in Russia, on the coast of the White Sea, fitted out a vessel to sail to Spitzbergen, for the purpose of whale-fishing, or for procuring sea-cows. The wind was so favourable, that, on the eighth day after it set sail, it reached the environs of Spitzbergen. The intention of the captain was to sail to this island, and cast anchor on

the western coast, where vessels from other nations are accustomed to come with the same view ; but suddenly the wind changed, and the vessel was driven to the eastern coast, without a possibility of their preventing it. The sailors were much grieved at this accident, for they knew, by experience, that there was much more ice on this than on the opposite side of Spitzbergen ; and indeed soon felt the truth of it, for they had not been there long before they were inclosed on all sides by lumps of ice resembling walls, between which the ship was so jambed-in as to be immovable.

My young readers know, by the preceding history, what it is to be thus stopped by the ice ; I shall therefore spare myself the trouble of describing it again. It was discernible to every eye, that the vessel was in a very dangerous situation, and that there remained little or no hope of saving it. The question now was, what the crew should do to save their lives ?

The land which they had in sight was not

the great island of Spitzbergen, but a smaller isle, situated to the East of it, and for this reason called East Spitzbergen. You may see it distinctly on the map, near Spitzbergen, properly so called. Whilst they were agitating the great question, what they should do? the mate recollected that, a few years before, some persons of the same town, Metzen, from which they themselves had come, resolving to pass the winter upon this island, had brought with them the wood necessary for building a hut, and had actually executed their plan. Not doubting in the least but that they could find the hut again, they resolved to look for and take possession of it.

With this view the mate, whose name was Alexey Himkof, called three sailors together to accompany him, for he wished to go himself to land upon this expedition. They took with them a tinder-box, a horn with twelve charges of powder in it, and as many balls, an axe, a small kettle, a bag with twenty pounds of meal, a flint, a bit of wick, a knife, a bag full of tobacco, and four wooden pipes.

I would not detail these things to you without reason: what follows will justify me. With these few things, and perhaps a stick in their hands, they left the vessel. The distance to the shore was only a league; but the way was dangerous, for the ice was not firm, but kept in motion by the rolling of the waves, and it was necessary to leap from one place to another with great care, for the least slip would have been death. They reached the land, however, without accident, but beheld a gloomy country covered with snow, ice, and barren rocks.

They had not walked far before they found the hut, of which they were in search; it was not so much as a mile distant from the shore, and had suffered no injury that could not be repaired. It was about thirty-six feet long, and eight feet high and wide: there was a little antechamber in it, and consequently two doors, one to shut each room. This arrangement had contributed to preserve the heat, when the room had once been warmed. Besides this, they found there a stove of white

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clay, after the Russian fashion, that is to say, a species of oven without a chimney. These kinds of stoves are very much in use in Russia, as they are useful to the peasant not only to warm him, but to cook his food, and at the same time form a bed to lie upon. In order to get rid of the smoke, they make little holes in the walls, which they open or shut at pleasure. These serve also as windows, and prevent the smoke from descending lower than the common height of a man when seated. Our four Russians were much rejoiced at having found this hut, and passed the night in it as well as they could, as if to consecrate it.

Early the next morning they set out to convey the news of their success to the vessel. They reached the coast; but who could describe their horror, when they saw the ice broken up all around them, and could no where discern the vessel? A violent tempest, which had arisen in the night, was the cause of the misfortune. For some time they stood stupified, and gazed around them with looks

of terror. At last they took courage, in the hope that the vessel had only been driven away by the tempest, and would return again. Vain hope! it never returned; nor was it ever heard of in Russia, so that most probably it sunk.

As soon as our Russians knew the dreadful fact, they shuddered to contemplate it. To live under such a climate, in a desert island, with so small a portion of meal, and so little means, either of defending themselves against the ferocious beasts, or of procuring any suitable nourishment, distant from every human being, and without a hope of being delivered, was an idea sufficient to fill the most courageous mind with terror; but our sufferers, knowing that lamentations would avail them nothing, soon roused themselves, and began to consult what they had best do to prolong their life, as it should please God, in this abode of misery. The first thing to which they turned their attention, was the repairing of their hut. As Russians, who are accustomed to build their own houses without the

help of a carpenter, they would not have found any difficulty in repairing it, provided they could have procured the necessary materials, such as wood, moss, &c. to stop up the holes: but where could they find these in an island entirely naked, where not a bush, much less a tree, was to be seen? Providence, however, was watchful over them: they found under the snow, and between the rocks, plenty of moss, and frequently by the sea-side parts of wrecks, or even whole trees, with their branches complete. Another thing they discovered too, which gave them much pleasure: they saw plenty of rein-deer feeding upon this moss. Hunger beginning to make its ravages amongst them, they succeeded in killing one of the deer. This furnished them with food for several days; and now they applied themselves with new vigour to repair the hut, which was completed in a few days. Their second care was to procure a supply of wood to defend themselves against the dreadful cold which was coming on. This they did pretty easily; and as they caught from time

to time some rein-deer, their principal wants were satisfied, and their situation was pretty tolerable to people whose tastes had not been vitiated by an effeminate and voluptuous life. But how could this last? Their powder and bullets were nearly consumed, and they had no other arms. How could they henceforth kill the rein-deer? and how could they defend themselves from the white bears, by which they expected to be frequently attacked? for they had observed traces of them in the neighbourhood.

Now it was, that they began to be in real distress; and who in this case could have preserved a sufficient firmness both of heart and head, to contrive new means of preserving his life? Reflect for a moment, my young readers, what you would have thought of to satisfy the wants of nature, and defend yourselves from the attacks of bears, had you been in the situation of these unfortunate people! I will give you three days to think of it, and this was all our islanders had, for their last shot was fired, and they were now

eating of the last rein-deer. You think, perhaps, that "they had a hatchet, by means of which they might defend themselves against the bears." It is true they had, but then that was only one weapon amongst them all; and was it likely that he who used it should always kill the bear at the first blow? If he failed, the bear would certainly not give him time to strike a second, so he would be lost, and all his companions without a weapon. And suppose they were attacked by two or three at a time, what would become of them then? Let us, however, for a moment, grant that impossible; let us grant the hatchet to be sufficient to defend them against all attacks of bears. What were they to do for food? How were they to overtake the rein-deer, which do not attack like bears, but shun those who attack them, with the greatest speed? Perhaps you would say, "they can make lances, bows, and arrows, and thus defend themselves with the one, and procure their food with the other." This is more easily said than done; for, in order that spears and

arrows should be useful, they must have iron points, and our poor islanders had no iron but the hatchet, a knife, and the steel to strike fire from. All these were indispensably necessary. How then could they sacrifice them to any other use? And if they did, how could they forge them?—for they had neither anvil, nor pincers, nor hammer. You see then clearly, that their embarrassment was as great as could be conceived. When I wrote this at my desk, I declare I could not think of any means of saving these poor people. But man is a wonderful being, inexhaustible in resources, when roused by necessity and urged by distress. This is the reason why we, who feel nothing of it in our parlours, are incapable of thinking of any thing to defend and nourish our unfortunate islanders; but if we were placed in the same dangerous situation, we should be more fertile in inventing expedients, although we cannot think of any at present, however much we exert ourselves. Without doubt, Providence, who governs all things, would order circumstances so as to

assist us in our endeavours: only let man do his best, and he may be certain that God will assist him. Of these truths, the following adventures of our Russians are a manifest confirmation.

Persuaded that, in the most desperate situation, they ought never to keep their arms folded, and give themselves up to idle despair, they went to the shore, and looked about, not knowing exactly for what. They found there, amongst the ruins of a vessel long ago wrecked, and thrown by the sea upon the shore, a miserable plank; but in it there was a large iron hook, and several large nails; to us these would not have been valuable, because we can get such things when we want them; but to them they were a treasure which they would not have exchanged for a bag of guineas. They found also another treasure, which we, perhaps, should not have thought worth taking up, but which was of infinite value to them: it was a strong and flexible root of a fir-tree.

With these great treasures they ran to the

hut, and in returning found a large stone, flat at the top, this they took to serve for an anvil. The great hook which they had found was round and thick at bottom, and had a hole in it as if for a nail to go through. They began by putting it in the fire to heat it, and then made pincers of rein-deer's horns to take hold of it when it was hot. Having done that, they put the red-hot hook upon the anvil, and drove the largest of the nails through the hole, in order to widen it: then they heated it once more, and cut off the thin bent end with the hatchet, and putting a piece of wood through the hole, thus formed a hammer. The piece of iron which they had cut off, when it was made straight and sharpened, and fastened to a long pole they had brought from the shore, formed an excellent spear: another weapon of this kind was made out of one of the largest of the nails. Now it remained to be proved whether these arms would stand a trial, and not long after, an occasion offered itself. A large white bear, which had discovered our Russians, ap-

proached the hut: as soon as they saw him, they resolved to go courageously to meet him, and so they did; the two sailors, bearers of the spears, plunged the sharp part down his open mouth, and after a hard struggle succeeded in killing him. The flesh of the bear kept them in food for some time, and they thought it as good as beef, probably because their hunger served as a sauce. Its great shaggy hide afforded them a means of keeping themselves warm in their hut; and they found besides, that some parts of its body were of great service to them—these were the nerves or sinews of the animal. After a close examination of them, they found that they could be divided into several threads like packthread; this discovery gave them much joy, and was afterwards of great use to them. By and by, it came into their heads, that with these sinews, they could make an instrument to kill the rein-deer with; so they set to work. There was nothing to do but to cut a branch of a fir-tree into the shape of a bow, and then to use these tendons as strings. As

for arrows, it was no difficult matter to procure them; first, four nails were sharpened up to serve as points to small pieces of fir, to which they were fastened with bear's sinews, and then feathers of sea-fowls were tied to the other end, thus supplying an excellent bow and arrows.

I repeat it, man is an admirable being; he knows how to reap profit from every thing; he knows how to manage in every situation, to preserve himself from every embarrassment, if he will only make use of that great and sacred treasure which his Creator has given him—his reason.

Be proud, my young friends, that you are men! but, at the same time, honour human nature in every one of your brethren, and in those who partake alike with you in the sublime and admirable dispositions which the universal Father of all has thought proper to extend to his whole creation.

Who could have believed, if experience had not proved it, that a miserable iron hook, a few nails, and a branch of fir-tree, would have been sufficient to protect four men for

many years against wild beasts, ten times stronger than themselves? and would have been the means, too, of supplying them with abundance of food? Yet such was the case; for our brave Russians, armed with their spears, opposed whatever bears approached them, and, with the help of their bows and arrows, killed no fewer than two hundred and fifty rein-deer, whilst living on this desert island.

Hitherto they had known how to satisfy their most pressing cares; they could defend themselves against their enemies; they could kill rein-deer and foxes to satisfy their hunger. As for water, they could procure that from the fountains which here and there spouted from the rocks; or when the frost had changed it into ice, they could melt it, and thus satisfy their thirst; but they were still in want of many things to render life agreeable in this gloomy region of the globe.

They had plenty of wood to warm their hut, but they were obliged to burn it with economy, because they could not foresee that fortunate tempests would always furnish them

with a sufficient quantity. They had a small kettle; but it was the only vessel they had to draw and keep the water in, and melt the snow; and as it would have been risking too much to cook with it, they were obliged to be content to broil their meat a little, and then eat it without the addition of a single vegetable. After having lived upon the same food morning, noon, and night, for a considerable time, you will easily conceive that they began to be tired and wish for a change. These ingenious fellows set their heads to work to find out something that would do instead of bread, and they were not entirely without success. At first they began by hanging some meat from the ceiling in the smoke, and when it was well smoked, placed it on the roof of the hut, so that the bears or foxes should not get it: the air and wind dried it so that they could eat it like bread with their fresh meat. This method was of twofold use; it prevented disgust from their daily food, and afforded them a means of preserving for future use their superfluous meat.

But now another care presents itself! The long night is approaching, which, as we know by the preceding history, continues for four months in this part of the world. What were they to do without a lamp all this time? and how were they to procure one? One would say, perhaps, "they had only to keep up the fire, and that would throw out heat and light at the same time." All very well! but, supposing the fire was to go out, how were they to light it again?—the matches they had brought with them were almost consumed, and the flint was of no use without them. Perhaps our mariners did not know the method which the savages had of procuring fire, namely, by rubbing two pieces of wood one against the other; and, if they had, most probably they would not have succeeded, for the art can only be acquired by practice. It was necessary also, to have two kinds of wood for the purpose—one hard and the other soft; whereas what our people had was all of the same kind—fir. To have a lamp, therefore, was of the greatest importance, both to keep

up the fire, and prevent the danger of losing it; so our sailors set their wits to work, to satisfy this pressing want. Fortunately they had observed a place in the island, where there was a kind of white clay; with this they tried to form a vase which would serve for a lamp; they moulded it into the shape of one, and dried it in the fire, then, having put some old rag in, they filled it with rein-deer's fat instead of oil. No sooner had they lighted it, and the fat begun to melt, when, to their great vexation, they saw it ooze through the clay: this was an unexpected mortification to them, but they would not suffer themselves to be discouraged; on the contrary, they considered how they could best prevent it.

With this view, they made a new vase, which, first of all, they dried well in the open air, then heated in the fire, and then threw into some boiled flour and water;—this paste penetrated into the pores of the clay and stopped them up. When the lamp was dry, they again lighted it, and had the inexpressible joy of seeing that their plan had succeeded, and



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the lamp lost no oil. To provide still better against such an accident, they pasted a piece of linen on the outside ; and, lest any accident should happen to this, they immediately made two more. As for the wicks, they made them out of old shirts and some cordage which they found upon the shore amongst the wrecks.

Here we have seen, by the example of these brave men, what attention and reflection, animated by a desire to succeed, can effect : and here we may have an opportunity of learning how much is to be gained by attending to the experience of others as well as our own.

Our four adventurers began to be afflicted with the scurvy ; it is well known that this disease, so incident to mariners, is more dreadful, the nearer you approach the northern polar regions. It consists in a corruption of the blood, which generally attacks the gums first, but afterwards spreads over the whole body, rendering the parts attacked extremely painful and weak. It was easy to foresee

that our sailors would soon be unable to stir themselves, much less catch rein-deer, kill bears, and look for wood: were this the case, destruction would be inevitable; there would be no prospect but of a miserable death, arising from cold, hunger, and thirst; nor would there be any hope of help. What a dreadful idea was this! All their exertions, all their attention to promote their interest, their steady patience, their courage, would have availed them nothing, if to all these admirable and necessary virtues, there had not been one thing added, namely, experience; how often does this rescue us from great difficulties? Our own minds cannot invent everything: the greatest application on our parts, cannot compass every object of our wishes; and Divine Providence, so full of wisdom and goodness, does not assist us by miracles, but only creates means of assisting us, and affords them at the proper time, when we put our trust in him and do the utmost in our power. It is our business to turn our attention to the knowledge of the things of this world, their

properties and effects, to collect with care our experience, and that of others, and to preserve them in our memory so as to be able to call them to our assistance at a moment's warning; and He who delights in beholding the exertions of his creatures to arrive at perfection, will prosper our endeavours.

Fortunately, one of our islanders had been accustomed, from his youth, to impress deeply in his mind all the useful knowledge which he had the opportunity of acquiring, even when he could not foresee in what way it could possibly be of use to him: this was the youngest amongst them, the son of the mate. Together with other useful knowledge he had stored up in his mind, he recollected some remedies against the scurvy, which he had heard from men that might be depended upon: he therefore advised his companions to follow his example, and take a great deal of exercise, however stormy the weather, or severe the cold; "for," added he, "whoever gives way to his inclination for repose and sleep, will not be able to stir, after having passed

two or three days thus in sloth: besides,' said he, "it is necessary that we go and look for herbs, and pull them from under the snow, and eat them raw. This is advice which I do not scruple to give you, because I know that you will be well repaid for its unpleasantness. When we kill a rein-deer too, we must drink its blood whilst warm, for this is what our ancient neighbours, the Samojedes, do, not, as I have heard, because it is pleasant to their palates, but because they know by experience, that it is an excellent remedy against the scurvy. I have heard too, of the same people, that they freeze fish and meat together, and eat them raw. It is true there are no fish upon our coast (and if there were, we could not catch them); but, thank God! we have meat, and can from time to time freeze some of that, and eat it raw, though our tastes may recoil at the idea, to which we are not accustomed. When physic must be taken, we do not ask how it tastes, but whether it is a cure? Come, then, my compa-

nions, follow my example, let us go and look for herbs!"

Two of his comrades, the mate and second sailor, followed his advice, and were benefited by it; but the third, who was fat and consequently lazy, could not prevail upon himself to do so much; he was very fond of lying on his soft and warm bed in the hut, whilst his companions were working in the snow, and the blood and raw flesh of the rein-deer were so nauseous to his delicate palate, that he absolutely could not get himself to take his share. The three others preserved their health and strength; one of them particularly, who had exercised himself the most, had acquired such great swiftness in running, that, for a long time after, the best horse could not outstrip him. The lazy man grew worse every day; in a short time he could not crawl out of the hut, and at last could not even raise his hand to his mouth, so that his comrades, struck with compassion, were obliged to feed him like an infant just born. He lived six

years in this state, when at last death relieved him from his sufferings.

Does not this teach us an instructive lesson? Do we not here learn how necessary it is to follow the advice of those who have had experience? And do we not also learn how pernicious voluptuous habits are in every situation of life? Man is like water; as long as it keeps in motion, it is pure; but hardly has it stood still a few days, when it is tainted, and produces corruption: such is man as soon as he devotes himself to repose and idleness! Activity, my young friends, is the only means of preserving the soul and body in health and cheerfulness; slothfulness, on the contrary, precipitates us into disease and misery. Store up then this admirable lesson! Remember, if any of you become sailors, that this is the opinion of old and experienced mariners. I once heard a commander of a vessel in the Russian war, a man who had been at sea a great many years, say, "I never had a man on board my ship diseased with the scurvy." Upon my asking him, what

means he had taken to preserve the health of his crew? he answered, "By never allowing them to be idle; if they have nothing else to do, I make them all dance upon the deck."

Our heroes, those only I mean who had been active (for the fourth was lost both to himself and to society, the moment he abandoned himself to sloth), our three heroes then had surmounted many difficulties, but there still remained many more: their shirts were almost all used up in making wicks, and it was necessary to use them for that; their stockings and shoes were worn out, their other clothes were in a very bad state, and they were just entering upon a severe winter. It was absolutely necessary to replace their clothes; but where were they to get others? They had bears' hides and rein-deer hides, and fox skins, but these were not prepared: how were they to make them supple and soft, so that they could use them? and when they had done so, how were they to proceed? They were neither tailors nor shoe-makers—they had neither scissors, nor needles, nor awls.

nor thread to go to work with. Here was a difficulty.

The first thing they considered was, how they should tan the hides: with this view they left some in water for several days, in order to soften them, then pulled out and scraped off the hair, and having dried them, greased them with rein-deer's fat, and rubbed them well. By this treatment they became soft and pliable, well adapted for making boots and shoes.

But now they must have some with the fur on, to defend them from the dreadful cold that would soon come on: raw hides would not do for the purpose; it was necessary therefore to invent a new method of tanning, to render the hides pliable without stripping them of the fur. After a little reflection they made an attempt, which, to their great joy, succeeded. They put those destined for the purpose into water, and left them in it only one day, so as to render them merely soft, and then served them as the others, without, however, pulling off the fur. Thus, in a few

days, they were furnished with good materials to make both shoes, boots, and clothes.

But where were the needles and awls? And when these were provided, where was the thread? This last question was the most easily solved; for they already knew that the sinews of bears and rein-deer could be divided at pleasure into fine and coarse threads. But the needles! the needles! Here was the difficulty, which appeared really insurmountable: it was, however, surmounted. Our Russians, ingenious and diligent, began by drawing out a red-hot nail almost as thin as a wire; having sharpened a knife for the purpose, they drove it through one of the ends, thus forming an eye, and by rubbing and polishing the point upon a stone, they made it as smooth and as round as one of our needles. The only defect in this was, that the eye was rather sharp, and cut the thread too easily; but this could not be remedied.

To have seen them take up their new profession of tailors and cobblers, would, I am sure, have been a pleasing sight. One made

a pair of boots, another a pair of breeches, and another a garment of his own invention, One took his former dress for his pattern ; another, giving scope to his genius, invented a dress much more suitable to the cold climate they were in : he did not make it open in front, like our dress, but made it close, so that it was necessary to put it over the head to get it on ; he added, too, a hood to cover the head, and tie under the chin, so that there was no aperture left, except what was just necessary to see through. Their knife served them as scissors. As the severe cold of winter was coming on, they made nothing this time, but clothes with the fur on ; but, as the summer approached, they made others without the fur, that they might accommodate their dress to the seasons.

It was thus that these courageous men, without any assistance, and without the necessary tools, contrived, by the exercise of their understanding, by diligence and perseverance, to supply their most pressing wants. Their lot would have appeared in some degree sup-

portable, had not this idea presented itself; that some one of them would survive his companions, would live for a while without a soul to help him, and finally die a miserable death. The poor mate had still a greater cause of grief: when he left Russia, he left there a wife and three children; every time he lay down in the hut after the hard labour of the day, his soul was in Russia in the midst of what he held most dear in the world, at one time fixed with lively regret upon the image of his dear wife, at another upon that of one of his darling children. Oh, how often were his eyes bathed in tears, when those of his companions were closed in sweet repose! But, when it was necessary to work and be active, he was in his place with the others; he expelled every gloomy thought from his mind, and worked with as much vigour and gaiety as if he had no wife or children.

You see then, my young friends, that such feelings as can be easily repressed when occasion requires it, must be good feelings; such do not debilitate the soul, but rather exalt it;

and in this case a man of sensibility need not blush at the tears which human feeling sometimes calls forth. But, if we suffer ourselves to be subdued by any feeling, however good or noble, so as to be incapable of fulfilling our duty, or so as to fall into slothfulness and complainings, we may be good people, but we are not men ; we are poor weak women in men's clothing ; and is it not disgraceful to bear the semblance of the stronger race, and conduct ourselves as though we belonged to the weaker?

Now let us return to our islanders: their principal wants are satisfied, and we have time to learn some particulars of the island which they inhabited. Almost all that I have said of Spitzbergen in the foregoing narration, is applicable to this island, which forms a part of it. In length and breadth it is about forty leagues, and as little inhabited as Spitzbergen: white bears, rein-deer, white and blue foxes abound. The whole island is full of pointed rocks of an enormous height, covered with ice and snow the whole year round. With the

exception of that salutary herb which grows here and there, and a kind of moss every where in abundance, there is not a single vegetable to be found on the island. The night in these countries lasts four months, and the day four months; during the absence of the sun, the moon shines for two months with undiminished splendour, and during summer the sun never sets. The brilliant Aurora Borealis, or northern lights, are a great blessing in these regions when there is no sun.

The cold, as we already know, is very severe in these parts; but our sailors observed, that it was interrupted in the month of November by a continued rain until the month of January, for about seven weeks, and during this the weather was as mild as it is with us when it rains in winter. Storms are very rare here: for six whole years, our sailors only once heard the dull sound of distant thunder. In winter the snow is sometimes of a prodigious depth; the hut, which was eighteen feet high, was frequently so buried in the snow, that it was impossible to get out but by

an aperture at the top of the roof. This then is sufficient concerning these gloomy regions.

My young readers will not, I suppose, require of me to give them a journal of the uniformly miserable life our unfortunate mariners led; this would be demanding more than I could really furnish, because it never entered the head of our mariners, deprived of the necessary materials for writing, and fully occupied in the preservation of their lives, to write a history of every day's transactions and occurrences: we must therefore be content with knowing, that they lived more than six years in this situation, and that during all that time not one vessel appeared in these parts.

The unfortunate invalid was suffering in the mean time, a severe punishment for the idleness to which he had at first abandoned himself: he was unable to stir; he was obliged to remain in the same posture, suffering the greatest tortures, and wholly dependent upon his faithful companions for the supply of food; until at last the kind hand of death closed his eyes in peace, and released him from his cares.

Polar Scenes.

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His comrades buried his body in the snow. During his life they had shewed him an attention that did honour to them and to humanity. Be assured, a high degree of charitable feeling is shewn, when a human being suffering pains and inconveniencies of every kind, exposes himself to still greater evils for the sake of a brother in misfortune. But thus it is, adversity excites and strengthens every kind of virtue, and our own sufferings render us compassionate and beneficent to others.

One would have supposed that these three Russians would have been glad to get rid of this invalid, who was such a charge to them; but no! they would willingly have prolonged his sad existence, they would willingly have taken the charge for six years longer; for although he was incapable of doing any thing for them, yet in himself he afforded the society of a human being; and to people who lived as they did, in a desert island, separated from the inhabited world by extensive oceans, what can be more grateful than society? the presence of a single human being is to such invaluable.

Thus has our common Father united his children by the ties of sociability; how terrible therefore must have been the idea which sometimes entered the minds of our mariners, that to be left alone must fall to the lot of some one of them! It is now time to bring this memorable history to a conclusion.

One day, as they were walking on the shore in search of floating wood, and casting anxious glances over the sea to that part where they thought Russia was, they descried (and who could describe their joy at the sight?) a vessel floating on the waves far distant from the island. For a moment they were lost in delight, but suddenly the thought struck them that if they delayed there, giving way to immoderate joy, the vessel might meanwhile sail away and disappear for ever from their view. They ran hastily to the hut, brought fire and wood from it, lighted a large fire upon two hills, whence the smoke and flame ascended to the sky. One of the men brought a rein-deer's skin, tied it like a flag to a pole, and ran to the shore waving it,

thereby shewing that there were men here who wanted to be delivered. Fortunately the ship's crew saw the fires and the flag; and the captain, not unmindful of the sacred duties of humanity, put towards the coast. The vessel anchored at a short distance from the shore, and a boat full of sailors came to see what men could be upon this island.

Figure to yourselves, if you can, the joy of our islanders, and the astonishment of the crew, at seeing three human beings before them, entirely clad in skin and furs, and speaking a language too so familiar to them (being themselves Russians). When they heard that these poor fellows had managed to live together for more than six years in this desolate region of ice and snow, they were indeed astonished.

This vessel, which was from Archangel, was bound for the western coast of Spitzbergen, for the whale fishery. To the great vexation of the captain, but luckily for our sailors, it was driven by contrary winds to the eastern

coast. Thus a trifling misfortune befalling one person, forms the good fortune of others.

The captain readily consented to take our three Robinson Crusoes, with all they had, on board, and convey them to Russia: for this he demanded eighty rubles, about £18 in our money, which they willingly consented to pay. Young reader, do not be too hasty in your judgment! I see you are angry with the captain for making them pay so dearly for an act of humanity; but hear for a moment what he allowed them to bring over for this money.

During their stay in the island, these people had become rich; the treasures they had amassed consisted of 2000lbs. of reindeer's fat, more than two hundred hides of this animal, ten bears' hides, and a great number of white and blue fox skins; add to this their winter and summer wardrobe, their lances, their bows and their arrows, their lantern, their axe and their knife, both almost worn to the handle; their thread made

of sinews ; their awls and their needles, which they kept in neat bone cases ; and when you consider all these, I think you will not condemn the captain for charging eighty rubles for the carriage of goods which were worth two thousand in Russia ; and this may serve as a warning to young people not to be too hasty in their decisions.

The goods were carried on board—the captain weighed anchor, and our sailors, with joy, took leave of a country where they had led so miserable a life for six years and three months. After a five weeks' passage they arrived safely at Archangel.

As they were landing, a very tragical event had liked to have happened. The mate's wife (who had long since supposed her dear husband to be dead), as she was standing on the bridge at Archangel, near which the vessel was anchored, accidentally recognized him on board ; with a loud scream, she leaped off the pier to his embrace, but her leap was too short, and she fell into the water, so that the

sailors had a great deal of difficulty in bringing her out alive. Poor Himkof! what had been thy grief, if, after having borne so many trials, thou hadst only returned to see thy wife drowned before thou hadst embraced her! From this we may see to what unreasonable actions our passions may impel us, if they be unrestrained.

Our heroes landed in their Spitzbergen uniforms. The assembled people received them with shouts of joy and surprise; and the principal men invited them to their houses, enquired into all the circumstances of their romantic history, made them shew every thing they had brought with them, and were thoroughly convinced of the truth of what I have related.



THE END.

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